

The Littlest Trickster

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The Littlest Trickster

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Summary

Tony Stark finds out that neither he nor Loki are any match for a child determined to return to Earth to go Trick-or-treating. Asbrand Lokison Stark, the newest heir of Asgard experiences his first Halloween. And somehow convinces his parents to move to Midgard. Where, as it often happens... things don't always go smoothly. A compendium of Short Stories in the Queens Grace Verse AU, Comes after Palaces of Sand and Gold, but can be read alone. **COMPLETE.**

Chapter 1 - 10 - The Littlest Trickster - Ash discovers Halloween

Chapter 11 - Leaves aren't the only thing falling - Sir George gets Tony in trouble

Chapter 12 -15 - Ash has a Cunning Plan - Ash enlists help to surprise his Móðir, things do not go as expected.

Chapter 16 - In the Dog House - Tony bestows an usual, and not entirely welcome present. Ash decides if he is a Team player.

Chapter 17 - The Magic School Bus - If it isn't one damn thing it's another. Coping with life and magic is getting on Tony's last nerve.

Notes

A collection of short stories starting with The Halloween Arc!

Beta'd and CO_WRITTEN by the most splendiferous Stella!
With Final Beta'ing by Emu Sam!

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See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

What makes a great pumpkin?

Chapter Notes

Beta'd by the wonderful Stella! And then I change things. So all mistakes are a 'my bad'. :D

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)



Chapter 1 – What makes a great pumpkin?

It had started out innocently enough, with Ash being fixated on wearing only his favorite shirt. Err... Tunic. At any rate, having done much the same himself as a kid, Tony was at a loss as to why this was a problem. So one of the housemaids did a few extra loads of laundry that week, what of it? He certainly paid them enough. However, on the fifth day that Ash had insisted on wearing that same tunic, much to the irritation of Loki and his nurse, Tony had teased him that he wasn't Charlie Brown, and he could wear something different for a change.

Not that Charlie Brown had worn anything quite as stylish as Ash's Asymmetrical green and black tunic, being a simplified version of one of Loki's more casual looks. But his teasing of course led to the normal small child's round of twenty questions about who was Charlie Brown and why did 'he' always wear the same shirt. And with Ash's need to 'understand' everything adults said to him, it also led as sure as atoms decay, to several evenings being devoted to a Peanuts marathon for the whole family. That thankfully for Tony went over much better than when he'd tried to interest

the kid in Sponge Bob. That time Loki had not been amused.

Of course, if Tony had known that letting Ash watch *'It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown'* was going to lead to the kid having such a major meltdown, in addition to erasing it from Jarvis' servers, Tony would have bought up the franchise and banished the movie forever. Ash was enthralled by the entire idea of Halloween, badgering Jarvis for background information and watching Hocus Pocus and Halloween Town. A holiday where kids gathered together and dress up and were given gobs of candy?

Or apparently a rock if you were Charlie Brown and dressed like a ghost?

Which begat a litany of how was it that Ash had never known about it? Why had **he** never been allowed to go trick-or-treating? While his kid did not go so far as to accuse him and Loki of being abusive parents, Tony could see he thought they were at the very least A+ borderline.

And then it happened, Asbrand turned into a Little Loki Mini-me. The kid might have had brown hair rather than raven, and liquid brown eyes rather than emerald green, but in every other way that counted, he was a true son of the Trickster. Including Loki's habit of solving problems by cutting out the middleman and going straight to the top.

Tony wasn't sure if he should be mad that the kid passed over them, or amused at the full court press that he aimed at Grand Sire and Grand Dam. Efforts that resulted in Odin and Frigga being ushered into his living room several evenings later, not long after the family had finished up an excellent lasagna dinner.

Having their cook take classes every time they went to Earth was really paying off as far as Tony was concerned.

Brows slightly furled in puzzlement, Loki simply stood up gracefully to greet the older gods, over excited exclamations from Ash as he pelted towards them.

"Grand sire! Grand Dam! You came!" The boy cried delightedly as he danced from one to the other collecting hugs and kisses on the top of his head.

Paddling after him, Tony tried to keep a straight face while a hailstorm of curses raced in his brain. It was bad enough he had to put up with Odin when he went to the palace, it had to be against some law of nature for them to invade your home. And if it wasn't it should be.

Resigned, Tony made himself greet Odin, "Hi, er... What's the occasion?"

Odin who was still bending down to hug and pat Ash on his head, passed him off to Frigga. Straightening up and he said, "Greetings to you too, son in law, am I not welcome to drop by to talk to you, and say hello to my dear grandson now?" The sentence was so unlike the usual All-Father speech that Tony knew something was wrong. Very wrong.

"What? Yeah, sure! Any time." He glanced at Loki pointedly and coded a subtle help-me-out-here message with his natural smile, before adding, with only the merest trace of suspicion in his voice, "It's just they you usually call us to the palace when you want to talk."

"Unfortunately All Father, it's well past Ash's bedtime, let me put him to bed and then we can talk. Ash, no pouting, you know the rules. Perhaps Grand Dam would like to come with us and read your *Epilogue to The Three Little Pigs*, story."

"Of course I would," Frigga declared, gathering the child up in her arms and giving him another hug.

As Frigga and Ash followed Loki upstairs, Tony tried hard to decide if Loki fucked him over by retreating *with* his son and mother, or did he really think that letting him talk one on one alone with Odin was actually helping.

He suspected the former.

Clearing his throat uneasily, Tony decided he couldn't delay the unavoidable anymore, no matter how much he wanted to. "So..."

"Yes." Odin put on his best kingly cold stare. "'So'. As you Midgardians like to eloquently start a sentence." Tony worked not to gulp audibly, wondering which part of hell, or Hellheim, broke loose. "The Queen of Asgard and I would like to find out the reason behind our grandson's recent obsession with this pagan worshipping of the dead and spirits. Do you think me so foolish, Anthony Starkson, that I do not notice your many attempts to minimize our influence to steer my grandson away from his Asgardian roots? Or how, you now, even dare to foster and plant the seeds of pagan Midgardian religion in his young mind?"

Tony's first thought was of course, *what the fuck*? Because seriously? Tony didn't believe in any religion himself, let alone want to plant it in anyone else's mind.

His second thought was a pretty sarcastic, *very wise, thank you Brain*. Because honestly? How was *what the fuck*, the best his genius brain could come up with as a first thought?

His third and most fervent thought was, *Loki, you bastard. Where the hell are you when I need you?!*

Chapter End Notes

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Release the Kraken!

Chapter Summary

Agent?!

Chapter Notes

Beta'd and CO_WRITTEN by the most splendiferous Stella! Aka ykmust !

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See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter – 2 – Release the Kracken!

Since not one of his thoughts had actually been the least bit helpful, Tony stared at Odin like a deer in the headlights for a long moment. But then, desperation finally pulled his very best Bullshit Babble Mode, the mellow, smooth one he used to testify in court with, and thrust it to the forefront. And just for good measure, he squared his shoulders and decided to channel Diplomatic Loki, by taking the high road and not pointing out that Asgardian customs, via the Vikings, had once been regarded as pagan on Earth.

"I assure you that is totally untrue, I believe what you are referring to is a holiday we call Halloween. A secular holiday which has lost its original religious meaning and is nowadays simply treated as an annual event where kids dress up and demand candy from their neighbors. Other than the risk of being kidnapped, poisoned and murdered, it's absolutely safe and implants no pagan thoughts at all in the darling little tots." Odin, suspecting correctly that Tony's dulcet tones were delicately mocking him, scowled at Tony. Undeterred, confident that the one eyed bastard would not kill his only grandson's beloved father, Tony continued laying it on with a trowel. "Your grandson is totally loving both his Migardian and Asgardian roots, and I am one hundred and ten percent fine with that."

Okay, so that last bit was a flat lie. But hey, it wasn't like he has under oath to tell the truth or anything. And since he was already on a roll, lying wise, Tony decided to lay it on a bit thicker. Just because he could. "And I want you to know, I am completely fine with him learning all about his noble Asgardian heritage." Tony even put his hand on his heart did his solemn face.

Tony was pretty sure he deserved a pat on the back for not breaking a sweat when Odin glared at him for mocking. Not that the old bastard could prove it.

"Well then, I suppose you, as the head of Aśbrand's house, should have no problem arranging for me, my Queen, and my grandson, to participate in this so-called Halloween as he so ardently desires." Odin's one eye fixed on Tony with a gimlet stare. "If the truth is as you said, we would see for ourselves that this custom does no harm. Do you not agree?"

What the... What?

"I..."

"Do you not agree?" Odin took a challenging step forward and tilted up his chin.

"Uh, yeah. Totally." Because truthfully, what could be more fun than having to put up with Odin during Halloween. Other than a root canal with no Novocain maybe.

Just at this moment, Tony saw from the corner of his eyes that his suspiciously absent to save-his-own-skin partner-for-life had sauntered back into the living room.

"All Father," Loki greeted his not-father, and turned to his mortal lover with a falsely inquiring lift of his brows. "Tony, what did I miss?"

"Er..." Not so eloquent for a genius.

"Aśbrand, your mother, and I will be accompanying you to Midgard and participating in this Halloween, as agreed to by your Head of House." Odin said with a smirk and a glint of mischievous joy in the old bastard's one good eye.

Great. And fuck you very much old man, for breaking it so nonchalantly to my Diva that he was going to have to spend time with you.

"Oh? Is that so, Stark?" The Trickster arched one elegant eyebrow, this time in gentle disbelief.

And Tony wondered, not for the first time, if he should try installing Jarvis into to his own brain, knowing that this would be ridiculous. Since Tony invented Jarvis, logically every bit of advice Jarvis give him to get out of trouble, he should already know.

"Stark?" And Loki crossed his arms.

Except he didn't.

OoooO

They had barely made it into the Penthouse when Tony's phone rang.

"Not that we aren't always happy when you bring your entire household Stark, but please tell me the City of New York is not being blessed with an impromptu visit from the King of Asgard." Coulson asked, his light, casually conversational tone at odds with his choice of words.

Signaling with his hand for everyone to continue as they were, Tony made a face at his phone, and heading back out to the terrace, idly wondering which neighboring building had a SWORD security camera array mounted on it. Fuck, knowing SWORD, Tony imagined there was one on all of them, so he spun in a slow circle waving panoramically.

"New York City is not going to be so being blessed," Tony parroted in his best *testifying-under-oath-trust-me* voice. "In so much as that would not really be a blessing, which I know because—"

"So... The King of Asgard isn't on earth?" Coulson interrupted, his tone was now skeptical, "There is some other, white haired, one eyed Asgardian you just happened to bring with you?"

"Now did I say that? No, I didn't. I just said Odin wasn't visiting New York City. And he isn't, we're just stopping here to pick up a few cars before heading to Loki's Evil Villain Lair in New Jersey, the houses are a lot closer together there, besides it pisses Loki off when we go there."

"Why?"

“Well,” Tony drawled, “I suppose because it’s hard for something to be a secret lair when even the third housemaid knows where it is.”

There was a brief moment of silence, and Tony could just imagine the steam curling out of Agent’s ears. Or Director Agent as Tony supposed Coulson should now be called. But you had to give it to the guy, no matter how he felt, he always sounded unflappable.

“No Stark. Why are you taking the King of Asgard to New Jersey?”

“Now did I not just say that we were going there because the houses were a lot closer together? The fact that it pisses Loki off is just a bonus.”

“Stark, I have Romanoff on the way to see you right now, if you don’t cut the bullshit and tell me why the hell you’re doing going to New Jersey with the King of Asgard I’m letting her have her way with you.”

“Phil, I’m a happily married man. Or should I say fairly content. You know what? Let’s just say married life has its moments, and leave it at that.” Tony babbled, making made a face and wagging his head from side to side for a moment, hoping Colson was watching the video feed live. And yes, he stuck his tongue out. No face making would be complete with out it after all.

“Stark you have thirty seconds to make me understand what is going on before I unleashed the Widow on you.”

Chapter End Notes

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Drama!

Chapter Summary

Angst. It happens in a young man's life. Sometimes its harder to be the son of a god, mage, genius, and billionaire, than it is to be a regular kid.

Chapter Notes

Beta'd and CO_WRITTEN by the most splendiferous Stella! After beta'ing I change things. So all mistakes are a 'my bad'. :D Please feel free to let me know about them.

Somewhere there is someone cursing for lack of fluff in this chapter.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 3 – Drama

So Tony explained what was going on as best he could. Because hell if he could understand why Odin decided to fixate on the subject of Halloween. To say that Phil was unhappy that the King and Queen of Asgard were both on earth, would have been an understatement. But it was nothing compared to how unhappy he was when he found out that said King and Queen, along with the second and third in line for the throne of Asgard were shortly going to be traipsing through the wilds of New Jersey trick-or-treating.

“Honestly Coulson I don’t understand what you’re so upset about. Fricken Asgardians are practically bulletproof, and my white haired grandmother of a housekeeper is probably stronger than ninety-five percent of your agents. And let’s not talk about Aśbrand’s nurse Skjálf , who I also brought. Not only is she Asgardian, but she’s also one of Queen Frigga’s ex-Shield Maidens, and could give Cap’n Spangles a run for his money on his best day.”

However, stronger than fuck shield maidens, and a sprinkling of palace guards notwithstanding, Tony was given to understand that there would be numerous plainclothes agents staking out the lair. No doubt adding to Loki’s joy. And in the future they, Earth by way of SWORD, would like a little bit more warning before hosting off realm royalty.

Not that there was any way for Tony to call or text until he actually got here. But Tony decided to leave pointing that out for another day. Or maybe he would have invented something for that by then. It wasn’t like he didn’t have a few ideas he was mulling over. Not that he had a lot of mulling time these days. What with him going over everything in Asgard’s arsenal more complex than a single chunk of metal. But hey, It wasn’t like Director Agent needed to know that.

OoooO

Natasha, who had met them down in the tower’s garage, was now in the Lair’s kitchen making nice with Odin’s security, while Marji escorted the parents on a short tour Loki’s little hideaway. Or hovel as Odin no doubt considered it, not that Tony was arguing with him on that one. Loki and

Tony lounged in the living room watching Ash bouncing as he looked out the front big front window.

“Daddy look!” Ash shrilled excitedly, pointing down at the street. And then when Tony didn’t move quick enough, he darted over to where Tony was sitting on the couch and grabbed his shirt sleeve to try and drag him to the window faster.

While it was still light out, Tony could see a costumed kid already being escorted somewhere by a much older sibling.

“Is it time to go meet the other kids? Shall I go get Grand Sire and Grand Dam?” If they thought he had been enthusiastic before, now Ash was practically breathless as he vibrated with excitement.

“Whoa buddy.” Tony laughed swinging the boy up on to his hip. “We don’t have to go meet anybody we have plenty of time, you need to calm down a bit okay?”

Ash reared back and looked at him like he was crazy, his little face screwed up in puzzlement.

“What?” Tony said, giving him a little bounce when Ash just stared at him.

Instead of answering Ash twisted and looked over at Loki sitting on the couch a moment before turning back to Tony. “But. But... We have to go meet the other kids so we can go trick-or-treating,” His voice laced with worry. “I can’t go by myself!”

“Of course not darling,” Loki said, joining them by the window, looking down the street as long white fingers gently brushing the hair out of Ash’s face. “You’ll be with us, and Grand Sire and Grand Dam of course.”

Now Tony would be the first to admit that as far as little kids went he hadn’t known a lot before Ash was born. But even so, he would have to say that on the whole the kid was remarkably well mannered. Frigga said he acted just like Loki when he was little. However, while Tony didn’t quite believe that Loki had ever been anything other than a stubborn, snarky bastard, their kid was a pretty mellow little dude. This was probably why both he and Loki were shocked when Ash practically threw himself out of Tony’s arms screaming.

“Nooooo!” Ash wailed, distress darkening his eyes, tears of disappointment already spilling down his round cheeks.

Wildly smacking Loki’s hands away from him, Ash bawled as he launched himself into a meltdown of truly heroic proportions.

“Holy Fu-nuts!” Tony gasped as one of Ash’s wildly kicking feet nailed him in his happy place. Doubling over in pain, Tony barely managed to avoid dropping his flailing, screaming son.

The kid would be wearing boots.

“Noooo! There has to be other kids! You have to have a big bunch of kids. That’s the whole reason I wanted to go trick-or-treating! So I could meet other kids!” Twisting halfway out of his shirt, Ash slid out from under Tony’s arms until he was curled up on his knees, forehead touching the floor, sobbing behind small hands. “--someone to play with... --real friend... --just wanna...” He tried unsuccessfully to push the now kneeling Loki away, wailing heartbrokenly as long arms drew him close, “***It’s not fair!***”

Tony stood there frozen, not entirely in pain as Loki, as distressed Tony had seen in many years, tucked a small head underneath his chin, the both of them trembling, abet for different reasons.

“What’s going on here?”

Ash was sobbing brokenly against Loki’s shoulder. Behind him, he heard Frigga murmuring something to Odin, and the sound of a door closing.

Rubbing, Ash’s back soothingly, Loki tried to comfort him, “Little Flame---”

“But Móðir, I want to play with real kids, not just you and daddy and the maids.” Ash whispered forlornly. Taking a break from wiping his no doubt runny nose despondently across Loki’s shoulder, he glazed sadly at his mother and asked in a heartbroken little whisper, “Why do we have to be princes?”

Chapter End Notes

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Meltdown

Chapter Summary

Cheesy one liners will only get you in trouble. Something Tony should try to remember in the future.

Chapter Notes

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Clouds will be parting tomorrow. Promise. :D

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 4 – Meltdown

“But Móðir, I want to play with real kids, not just you and daddy and the maids.”

Tony had never been one to easily handle drama. His standard fall back to angst was a cheesy one-liner. Something he really should have tried harder to resist.

“Sure, buddy, you feel that way now, but in a couple of years you—“

Stark!”

Loki glared at him with narrowed green eyes, and his lips pressed together in a hard line. Despite the clear warning that his attempt to lighten this situation up a bit was not appreciated, Tony couldn't help but demand, “Am I lying?”

“I don't want us to be princes.” Ash muttered rebelliously, his stuck out lip trembling as he drew in a shaky breath. “If we lived here we could be regular people and I could have real friends.”

Waving a free hand, Loki materialized a handkerchief and started gently wiping the boy's nose. “Aśbrand, it is just not princes who have to be careful.” Loki lifted his son's chin and looked him in the eye. “You know, your daddy is very rich. And his father was very powerful.”

Since Tony was pretty sure he knew where this was going, and that it wouldn't help in the least, he manfully resisted the urge to remind Lo, that he was every bit as powerful as Howard had been.

“And on this realm that is pretty much the same as being a prince, so if we lived in daddy's tower, or beach house, we would still have—“

“People pretending to like us. But not really.” Ash finished for him in a choked voice, fat tears once again rolling down his cheeks.

“Not always darling, but yes. Sometimes. Or trying to hurt our friends to get back at us.” Loki's

voice was as tired sounding as Tony had heard it in a long time.

Tony vividly remembered having the same meltdown when he was a kid. Although in his case it wasn't that there were no kids around the play with, it was that they never spent more than a few months at a time in any of their houses.

By the time Tony was old enough to go hunt down a neighbor kids to play with, they were all in groups already and the only ones he could spend time with were the weird kids who didn't know how to play right. In his heart of hearts Tony was pretty sure he had turned into one of those kids. Flushing with embarrassment even though it happened over fifty years ago, Tony still remembers once screaming like a maniac for Jarvis to stop the car when he saw two boys walking their bikes up a steep hill. He raced over to them, talking a mile a minute trying to introduce himself, and ended up scaring the shit out of them. Needless to say, they ignored his overtures and wasted no time in hurrying away. He had been both humiliated and devastated.

Even now, just thinking about that day makes his stomach churn painfully and bile rise up in his throat. The worst part is knowing that he is only experiencing a shadow of what he'd those many years ago. Tony still vividly remembers leaping out of the car before Jarvis could pull it into the garage. He swallows also remembering how Jarvis later found him helplessly crying and throwing up behind some of the bushes surrounding the car park.

By the time his old man had shipped him off to boarding school Tony hid his loneliness behind a mask of indifference, lashing out with snark and intelligence whenever he felt uncomfortable in a situation. Neither of which endeared him to his fellow students, his teachers, or indeed ninety nine percent of the people he's come in contact since then.

Slipping to his own knees Tony swallowed thickly as Loki turned a face, every bit as strained as Tony felt towards him. His own eyes stinging, hating that he couldn't change the way the world worked, Tony simply tightened his arms comfortingly around the two most important people in his life.

A bit later, Loki had shifted into cross-legged position, leaning against the front of the couch, holding Ash on his lap. With one arm around Tony's waist and the other comfortingly carding his son's hair, Ash's quiet weeping had been reduced to the occasional hitched breath. Tony was rhythmically patting a small leg as if his life depended on it, when a hand holding a cool damp wash cloth nudged him.

Opening his eyes, Tony saw Natasha, crouched in front of him. She jerked her red curls towards the back hallway.

"Your In-laws are having tea in the kitchen with Marji. Everyone else is down in the game room making sandwiches. If you three clean up and get changed, I'll take you to go meet the lady who lives across the street. The house with the blue stone stoop? Her husband is on second shift this week and they just had their third kid a few months ago. It wasn't easy, but I think I have her convinced to let her two kids go out trick-or-treating with you guys."

Tony gave her a hard suspicious look. *How in the hell did Nat know about the lady across the street? Or her husband and kids? Unless... Unless, SWORD had already investigated The Lair's neighborhood?*

Natasha ignored his death glare, "While neither of you are any prize, responsibility wise in my opinion, you'll most likely be better than the flaky teenager at the end of the block, who may or may not show up." She shrugged her shoulders, "Now come on you three, get moving. Halloween, waits for no one. Besides, we need to beat feet, before said teen shows up and steals our trick-or-

treaters.”

Tony accepted the wash cloth and handed it over to Loki.

It took several minutes of Loki wielding the wash cloth, and whispering reassurances about friendships that would someday be fostered, including the promise that Ash would no doubt someday find friends that would be with him for a lifetime for Ash to uncurl from a tight ball on Loki’s lap.

Tony wondered how much easier his childhood would have been if he’d heard those words a few more times when he was that little kid. Even though Tony now had a family. One he loved far beyond rational thought, and people friends like Pepper, Rhodey and even the Avengers would qualify as *friends*. And up to this day, he's still not sure how many people besides Marji’s daughter Esja, that his darling Trickster could call a *friend*.

Chapter End Notes

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What? This old thing?

Chapter Summary

A discussion of what colors make a Halloween Costume. Three guesses which colors they aren't.

Chapter Notes

Beta'd and CO-WRITTEN by the most splendiferous Stella! Aka Ykmust! After beta'ing I change things. So all mistakes are a 'my bad'. :D

And for your viewing enjoyment a clip art mash up Cover page. :D

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)



Chapter 5 – What? This old thing?

Suppressing a groan, Tony levered himself off the hardwood floor. His ass was thanking him. Speaking of asses being thankful... "Thanks, Red. I think."

Okay. So maybe that was not the most gracious expression of appreciation he has ever given, but

in his defense, it was to Natasha.

"It's not for you Stark, it's for the kid. I have a heart too, you know." The BAMF assassin said coolly. She nodded towards Ash, "Hey there little guy, you ready to dress up for your first ever Halloween? I've got you an outfit that I think you might like."

Looking up from brushing soothing green tendrils of healing magic across their son's forehead, Loki narrowed his eyes and regarded Natasha for a long moment. "You are aware that I can materialize any outfit Aśbrand desires, are you not?"

While his god may think Halloween is somewhat silly, his tone made it known that he was displeased with her offer. No doubt from knowing how much Tony was looking forward to dressing their son.

Shrugging, Nat said, "Of course, but I thought maybe the little guy would like a real one from the store like all the other kids would be wearing." Ash's head snapped up when she added that last bit. "Also, I thought he might like to surprise you two."

Looking to his mother for permission, and receiving a resigned nod from Loki in return, Ash climbed to his feet and cautiously approached the red haired spy. "Really?" He asked. Guarded, but not because she was unknown to him, or that he was afraid of her. Rather, because while he had known her for years, they had seldom spoken to each other in the brief times they'd been in the same room with each other.

"What kind of real costume, Lady Natasha?" Aśbrand asked, creeping closer, showing signs of curiosity even if his voice was still thick from crying.

"As I said, a special one," Nat replied, holding out her hand to the child. This time Ash looked to Tony for assurance.

Loki was still sitting on the floor against the couch, his back and shoulder hunched. Aware of what's was happening, but letting Tony take the lead for a bit. Worryingly, since this was definitely not typical Loki behavior when it came to Ash. But in fairness, Tony did have to admit that Loki usually deferred to him when it came to Ash interacting with Midga—Earth. With a small sigh, Tony nodded to Ash, but then quirked a brow at Natasha, "What? I don't even get to dress up my own son?"

With a small smile, Natasha tossed her head toward Loki, "You've got a few things to take care of here. And doubtless logistics to sort out with the Asgardian in-laws." She bend a bit closer and said softly to Tony, "The king and queen walked in on Ash's tantrum, you might want to sort it out." Then she looked down as Ash finally gave her his hand, and spoke in a much more cheerful voice, "Besides if you two have anything to do with it, Ash will either be in boring old gold and red, or gloomy old green and black."

"Ummm, I'll have you know that hot rod red is never boring. It is incapable of being boring because it is *hot rod* red."

"Whatever Tony. Come on Ash, let's go check out your costume. I'll race you to your room. Okay? Tony call it."

Startled, Ash looked at Natasha like she was crazy. Running indoors was not something adults normally, or in his limited experience, ever encouraged him to do. "It's okay buddy," Tony told him with a small smile and an encouraging nod. "Earth house, Earth rules. Ready?" The child nodded. "Wait for it. Wait. For. It... *Go!*"

Pelting towards the stairs, Ash yelled like a banshee, something else he normally didn't do in Asgard. The heart rending woes of a half hour ago replaced, at least temporarily with the simple joys of a surprise. And running and screaming indoors, he supposed wryly.

Natasha winked at him, and then loped after Ash in an easy, the *kid-was-going-to-win-by-a-hair* pursuit.

Tony blinked back the happy daddy tears that the sight of his son often caused. Then taking a deep breath to settle himself, lips thinned in a grimace, he rubbed the back of his head, and turned to his partner-for-life,

Upset Trickster. Oh joy. Not that he didn't care for Loki, he did. A lot. But overtly emotional touchy feely wasn't really how they rolled. Unless they were trolling someone, they were more a sentiment-lite kind of couple while anywhere but their own bedroom.

"Lo?" Tony held out a hand.

Clearing his throat, so that his voice was only slightly husky, Loki stopped examining the wood-grain and looked up at the proffered hand. "I'm fine," He said gruffly, but he did let Tony pull him to his feet. "Shall we go talk to the *Asgardian grandparents* and *sort it all out?*"

Right, godly hearing abilities.

Staring at the god's beautifully sorrowful smile, Tony pulled him into a heartfelt hug.

Letting go a long moment later, Tony was surprised to be immediately pulled back into Loki's arms, the Trickster all but crushing the air out of him with the intensity of his embrace. As suddenly as it began, Tony was released, and Loki walked away without a word. Tony just stood there slack jawed and frowning while Loki silently cat stepped towards the hall. The kitchen, Tony supposed being Loki's ultimate destination.

Sometimes he had no idea what his god was thinking. Scratch that, and make it *most of the time*. However, he was sure that once his god had thought about, '*whatever*', and had come to a decision on what changes were needed so he never had to deal with '*whatever*' again... Then Tony would be the first to know.

A bit worried, since he wasn't always in agreement that '*whatever*' needed to be fixed, it was Tony's turn to huff, and stare at the floor as if it personally offended him.

Chapter End Notes

As always comments and reviews are greatly appreciated, even if it is a simple I loved YYY, or ZZZ confuses me. They let me know which part is catching your attention. If you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

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Scary things you might find in kitchens for a hundred

Chapter Summary

Odin's idea of a good Halloween costume. Not what you'd expect.

Chapter Notes

Alright, another snippet of a silly holiday fic Ykmust and I came up with to celebrate the ten days running up to Halloween.

Beta'd by the most splendiferous Stella! Aka Ykmust! After beta'ing I change things. So all mistakes are a 'my bad'. :D

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)



[Perma link to picture incase it is not displaying properly](#)

Sensing the turmoil that now affected his mortal, Loki glanced back. Tony looked, as he himself would have put it, six kinds of adorable when he pouted. And while Loki wouldn't admit it to anyone, it equally caused him to feel six kinds of sentiment for his partner. Warmth in his heart, butterflies in his stomach, and a lack of concentration for anything other than a pair of whiskey colored eyes, being the top three sentiments he normally felt when regarding a pouting Tony. Of course number four might well have been exasperated affection. It was like he and Tony spent all their time on a huge tittermatorter, back and forth, their moods rising and falling opposite each other. Determinedly pushing aside his earlier distress, Loki tilted his head and decided to give Tony something else to think about. "I concur with the Black Widow," He said. Tony's head shot up, and Loki gifted his partner with an artfully careless shrug, specifically designed to distract.

"What?" Tony stared up at him, his worried frown, thankfully morphing into puzzled.

"The costume." Loki huffed, trying to lighten the mood by pretending to be annoyed at Tony's obtuseness. "You would ruin our son's first ever Halloween by putting him in a red and gold. It would... As you frequently say... Suck big time." In addition to using Tony's slang, Loki also finished with a Tony-esk little bounce, his hands clasped behind his back, a Stark-like smirk present but firmly contained on his face.

They stared at each other for a short while; one could almost hear the soft tik-tok of the clock in the background. And the Trickster could tell the exact moment his genius-yet-sometimes-dumb mortal finally got that he was being completely and utterly mocked. Tony's cheeks turned ruddy.

"I....! You...!" The mortal blurted out, pointing at the god right in front of him.

Loki examined his nails a moment, before flashing Tony a sly smile, "Articulate as always my darling."

"Okay, is this how you want to do it? I was *concerned* about you just now! *Worried*! Do you know how rare...Phhhhh...Fine!" He threw his arms in the air and didn't stomp in a circle. Not really, anyway.

"It should be rare. I will tell you when it is time to worry," Loki murmured, feeling relieved that he had distracted Tony from from thinking too much about the source of Loki's earlier troubled contemplations. He drifted back towards Tony and snaking an arm around his waist. After all, there was no sense letting Tony fret needlessly. Until they had enough information to come up with, if not a solution, at least a plan of action, it was better for his mortal to focus on happier things. Or rather, until Loki came up with enough information to decide what he thought was best. He certainly didn't need Tony trying to make a decision preemptively. After all, if his mortal disagreed, Loki needed to have his arguments thought out and ready.

Turning towards him, Tony looked up from under dramatically lowered brows. "First off! '*Hot Rod Red and Classic Gold*', are the patented Iron Man color scheme. Recognized around the world even. Okay? Get that in your godly brain. Second! I was not going to dress Ash in that, even if they were also the colors of my elementary school! Not that that matters of course. And Third!" Tony poked Loki's chest with a hard finger. "I *saw* you magiking a tiny gold-and-green Asgardian leather fetish outfit the other day. I bet you thought I didn't notice, huh?"

Looking down with a huff of laughter, Loki couldn't help but appreciate how Tony could, for the distraction value alone, work himself up into a mock temper tantrum. Later, they would return to the topic of Aśbrand's distress. But for now, they were back in the moment of enjoying their son's experience.

Okay, so now the tall bastard was laughing at him. "What's so funny? I am not funny," Tony gestured to his face, all wavy handed. "This is my serious face, you get it? I am seri...!"

Seriously feeling like my face just hit a brick wall, Tony gasped, wondering if his nose was broken. It might be for all the trouble he was having breathing with Loki holding him so tight against his chest. Fuck the armor, with all the strength moves Lo did as part of his exercise routine, he's be amazed if bullets wouldn't bounce off of the god's bare chest.

He could hear Loki taking a deep breath, smelling his hair. *Well, at least someone could breathe*, Tony told himself sarcastically. Before, belatedly wondering if he'd washed all the machine oil out of his hair from this afternoon little mishap in the lab.

He felt a soft kiss on his temple. "Thank you." He heard his god whisper as he wrapped his own arms around Loki.

"I'm fine. I really am. I have you, and Ash, and you have people who care about you and who also tolerate my existence. For the first time in centuries," The god tightened the hug. "I have people who are more akin to the definition of *friend* than ever." The god took another deep breath, ruffling Tony hair with his exhalation before ending the hug.

With a crooked smile that made a ridiculous amount of warmth blossom in Tony chest, soft green eyes sought his. "Now, shall we go talk to my nominally named parents and sort out this evening's itinerary?"

oOOo

Of all the things he thought might happen when he walked in the Lair's kitchen to check on the parents, almost having a heart attack wasn't one of them. Tony jumped back, dragging Loki with him since they had their arms entwined around each other. And it was an understatement that he was surprised. Or actually, scared. Like, horror movie level scared. He could hear a gasp of surprise from Loki as well.

"What the *'hell'* are you supposed to be!?" Tony yelled, giving up on formalities or whatever, admittedly scant, politeness he usually tried to afford Odin. And he knew it was Odin, since it was standing next to Frigga. Also, Marji probably wouldn't have been sitting there drinking her tea so calmly if the ugly assed green skinned humanoid figure covered with blisters and a massive beard *wasn't* Odin. A gross looking, eight foot tall, club holding Odin, but still.

"A troll, of course." Odin said, the grotesque face managing to still mimic the king's normal look of disdain at Tony's cluelessness. "This particular one was terrorizing one of the villages at the edge of Myrkviðr where I and my brothers Vili and Vé went hunting many centuries ago. Even though we were but youngsters, we had a glorious battle taking this vulgar mindless beast down. This was before Thor or Loki were born, of course, but we did tell them of this quest."

"Indeed they did. Quite the bedtime story, I always thought." Loki deadpanned. "Thor of course loved it. It was one of his favorites."

Tony could see saliva welling up and dripping between the jagged, rotten teeth in Odin-Troll's loose lipped mouth. But despite differences in the king's dental work, his voice at least hadn't changed. Or rather the more-superior-than-thou inflection he used almost every time he spoke to Tony hadn't changed.

"I see. Great story choice. Really must have punched the hero and Valhalla idea right in their young little minds. Hopefully, you skipped the visual." Tony said, faintly swallowing hard as he took in

the green drool or pus or whatever it was that was dripping out of Odin-Troll's mouth and pooling on the kitchen floor. As bad as the whole look of this wanted to make him hurl, now that he was fully in the kitchen, the a stench like rotten bodies and rancid sewage fumes were trying to burn the lining out of his nostrils. It was the smell of your worst nightmare. Squared.

Surströmming. Who knew there was a smell worse than surströmming? Thanks to Odin-Troll, Tony now did. He pretty much would have been content to live his whole life without finding this out.

Chapter End Notes

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Halloween costumes, come in hot and ewww

Chapter Summary

Tony, is not feeling too good right now.

Chapter Notes

Snippetlet posting ahoy! Or words of that nature.

Beta'd by the most splendiferous Stella! Aka Ykmust! After beta'ing I change things.
So all mistakes are a 'my bad'. :D

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 7 – Halloween costumes, come in hot and ewww

Tony's stomach did a slow somersault as a fresh wave of stench was lofted about by the furnace fan kicking in. Fighting back the bile rising up in his throat, he looked pointedly at one of Jarvis' cameras. Raising a brow almost to his hairline in silent question, Tony motioned the mess on the floor.

It still felt very weird that Jarvis remained so doggedly mute and unobtrusive whenever the Asgard Royals were around. But Tony supposed Jarvis did have his reasons, Odin not being amused by him being the main one. And despite not wanting to draw attention to himself by any autonomous actions, the AI did, at Tony's silent prompting, send several floor cleaning StarkScrubbers to deal with the mess.

Making a mental note of the Scrubber's Id Numbers, Tony sighed, knowing full well he would either have to trash the little buggers, or re-deploy them in one of the sub-basement parking areas of Stark Tower where any lingering aromas clinging to their mechanisms would not be an issue.

"So. Mrs O?" Tony waved a hand indicating her outfit and brought his hand to his face. While the gesture could be taken as one of puzzlement, in actuality, he just wanted to try and block his nose.

Frigga, who was already standing a few feet away from them, glided a few steps farther and did a slow spin, showing off her heavily gold trimmed outfit, complete with a helm, the honey wheat colored brush of which, threatened to dust the kitchen's pendant lights. "This is Athena, the Greek goddess of war and wisdom. I had the pleasure of meeting her once while travelling to Midgard. Seeing our common nature, she invited me for wine and figs dipped in honey." Frigga adjusted a fold of her chiton. The gold embroidery so thick along the edges of the material, Tony was pretty sure it would clang if she moved too fast. "I hope she doesn't take offense that I have taken her form for this evening," Frigga continued thoughtfully, ignoring both Tony astonishment and the stench from Odin's costume. "Perhaps I shall pay her a visit after today."

Mind-blown. Although Tony should have guessed if Odin and Frigga were real, some of the other alien gods were too.

"I see you have taken the *pagan* part seriously, my Queen," Commented Odin, dryly. Or as dryly as someone oozing goo could.

"Oh, don't be so, Odin. Hasn't Anthony already explained that this Halloween has lost its religious implications? Unlike you, I do try to have fun once in a while when possible. And besides, many in this realm, consider us to be pagan gods also." The Queen retorted playfully. "But might I add my dear, it amuses me that you have chosen to take the form of a monster and not that of a hero. Is there a special reason for that?"

Both Odin and Tony huffed a laugh at that last remark, and then looked at each other with narrowed eyes.

"Indeed, mother." Loki interjected, continuing with the smoothness of a seasoned courtier. "But why tempt the Norns? Might I suggest that rather than risking offending the Lady Athena, and drawing her attention to this area, you both might consider dressing up as Muggles?"

"Muggles?" Odin-Troll asked splashily.

Tony wasn't even going to look, there was, after all, only so much even his alcohol trained stomach could endure. And hurling all over the Protector of the Nine Realms was probably not a good idea. And besides, the poor scub-bots already had enough to do.

"Yes, Odin, you remember, from that book I told you about?"

"Also I fear," Loki continued smoothly, "That perhaps such a realistic rendition of a Troll, will alarm the local mortals to the point of calling their guard force, and terrify their children."

"Surely not."

"As well as Aśbrand," Loki continued riding right over the top of Odin's half-hearted protest.

Tony had to bite back a smile as Odin's Troll façade vanished in the blink of an eye. Since the ill-fated incident where he'd introduced the boy to Mímir, Odin had become leery of anything that might scare his grandson. Loki's screams of condemnation had been heard as far away as the guard barracks. And, after the kid's first headless nightmare, they, and Odin, found out just how mean a head slap Frigga could produce. Tony had half expected that damn gold eye patch to go rolling across the floor.

"Great idea." Tony snatched a tablet off the kitchen counter, his fingers dancing across it as he issued instructions to the silent AI. "Jarvis, we need some Muggle Grandparent costumes ideas. Maybe with some of those hokey, 'This is what an awesome Grand Sire looks like', and 'Gram Dam knows best' t-shirts. Oh, and cardigans. And, maybe some Dockers too." Tony slapped the tablet down on the table, sliding it towards Odin with only a tiny pang of worry about being taken to court for false advertising. But he figured as long as they avoid a '*World's greatest grandfather*' shirt, they should be in the clear. Misrepresentation wise, that is.

Pulling his phone from his hip pocket, Tony dashed off a quick text to Jarvis. After letting Jarvis know not to suggest the 'World's greatest' shirt to Odin, he pulled up examples of his own ideas, so Lo could bippy-bobbity-boo their costume supplies.

OoooO

"Remind me, Tony, why am I wearing this?" Loki's tone said more than his words did.

"I love Lord of the Rings." Tony chirped.

The cheerfulness in his mortal's voice could not be any more annoying.

“Beside, is there anything hotter than miles of skin tight silver lace lamé and a crown made of autumn leaves and branches? Crusted with gold of course, because you just love your precious metals.”

Loki huffed, suppressing slightly, but not really trying to hide a crooked smirk. Over the years, Tony had already gifted Loki with two magnificent crowns. The one that Tony called the Pretty, Pretty, Princess Crown was an explosion of diamonds, that sat on a black Chlorite bust depicting Loki. This crown had originally had a permanent place of honor on a plinth in their bedroom. Now however, due to it being too much of a distraction in the evenings, it alternated between there and a shelf in Loki's work room.

Leering suggestively, Tony slid his hand under the afore mentioned outer robe until strong, calloused fingers firmly gripped Loki's satin clad derriere. Pulling Loki close, Tony finished his display of appreciation for how fine his god was with a slow grind and a bit of eyebrow waggling. “You know how hot we both get when you wear a crown, and make me kneel.”

Pushing him away, with a smother snort, Loki said, "Don't be an oaf. How you rope me into these things I will never know."

Pulling Loki towards him again, Tony nuzzled that sensitive spot at the base of Loki's jaw that was guaranteed to get him an involuntary sigh of content. "Well, all the cool parents dress up to go out with their kids," He babbled while running appreciative hands under the several thin layers of material that Loki's now female form was tightly enveloped in. Female, so as not to blow their cover, in case Ash called her mommy in front of any muggles. And if it pissed Odin off in a low grade, but nothing he could really say anything about, kind of way?

Bonus!

Chapter End Notes

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What is the proper attire for a negotiation session?

Chapter Summary

And just where has Jarvis been all afternoon? And what the hell is Ash wearing.

Chapter Notes

Beta'd by the most splendiferous Stella! Aka Ykmust! After beta'ing I change things.
So all mistakes are a 'my bad'. :D

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 8 – What is the proper attire for a negotiation session?

Arching a brow, Tony asked, “Should I be concerned that your sharp godly mind cannot recall that we discussed the whys and wherefores of dressing up several times over the last week?” One of Tony’s hands just happened to sneak back under Loki’s robes and trace its way down her luscious ass to tuck suggestively between her thighs. Biting his lower lip, he rubbed against the thin material of her pants, while tightening his other arm around her trim waist, and rolling his body against hers. “Besides, if Elven Queen Thranduil plays her cards right, I might be open to... Suggestions on what activities take place after our prince comes down off of his sugar high and goes to bed.”

Loki ran her hands up his back, one hand continuing all the way up to the nape of Tony’s neck, tugging hard enough on his hair to pull him away from the breast he was nuzzling. Looking up, Tony couldn’t help but get excited at the sultry gleam in Loki’s hooded eyes.

“Would I be wearing anything more than these boots and this crown after these negotiations?” Loki purred a fraction of an inch from his lips.

“A collar and leash?” he asked hopefully.

“*Queens* do not wear collars,” Loki replied, delicately flicking her lips with her tongue. An act that caused heat to pool in Tony’s belly as his god continued, “Those are reserved for badly mannered *thralls*.”

“I could totally work with that,” Tony assured her, rising up to claim a kiss.

It was several enjoyable moments before Loki pulled away from him, “Are you done groping me? We do need to finish your ‘*costume*’, do we not?”

“What?” It took Tony a second to remember what came before this evening’s proposed playtime. “Costume, right.” Tony glanced around the rather modest master bedroom asking, “Okay... Where is that fake beard you bibbity-bottity-booed me?”

“I could—“

“Yeah, you could—” Tony imitated one of Loki’s magical hand gestures, and ignored his partners

put-upon sigh and dramatic eye roll. "But trust me, this will work better."

"It isn't even much of a costume." Loki groused, no doubt wondering why she was wearing layer upon layer of whisper thin material, as well as boots past her knees, while Tony got to slouch around in a comfortable Ironman hoodie, sunglasses and bits of fake beard augmenting his real one.

"I have to agree, sir. Are you sure that's a wise choice of a disguise?" Jarvis chimed in.

"How nice of you to join us, Jarv. Don't think I didn't notice your silence when the golden people are around."

"Apologies, Sir, but I am afraid the All-Father is not quite accustomed to my presence, as you may recall, he did cause an '*accidental*' power surge that somehow exploded all of my cameras last time I spoke."

"Okay, so that happened. But you know what I think? I think my house, my rules."

"Thank you, Sir. And I will keep that in mind when we are in the Tower or Starkhús. However, might I point out that technically '*this*' house is not '*your*' house, as it does in fact belong to Prince Loki."

"Don't nit-pick, Jay."

"I shall endeavor not to, Sir."

"You're my AI and I say you can speak and exercise your free will to join a conversation wherever you are."

"Despite the contractions in that statement, I will keep it in mind, Sir."

Tony grimaced towards one of Jarvis' camera's but decided to drop the topic. When Odin had so casually decided he wanted complete privacy, it had scared Jarvis down to the gold on his motherboards. So much so, that Tony was not surprised that the AI was not eager for another rematch.

"This is ridiculous," His life's helpmate grumbled, dabbing glue lightly on Tony's goatee. "You have a beard, are you too dim-witted to remember now? I simply do not see the purpose of putting on bits of fake beard over your real one."

"No one will suspect I have a real one under the fake one."

Skeptically, Loki tipped her head to the side considering. "Explain to me again why I can't just alter your appearance with a glamour?"

"Because your stuff looks too good, it has to look fake to work."

"Well, we certainly have achieved that," Loki conceded with ill-grace, adding another dab of glue and pressing down hard with a slender finger.

"Owwwwwwww!"

Random noise was all Tony could manage with a hard hand clamped around the back of his head and another pressing his cheek and jaw line. He rolled an outraged eye at Loki who smirked at him.

“While I understand it does not come easily to you, patience is required here.” With an evil grin she pressed harder. “I’ll just hold this in place until the glue sets, shall I?”

OoooO

Grimacing, Tony dropped his chin, rolled his jaw, making every weird face he could think of to try to work some of the stiffness out of his jaw. He just hoped that in his irritation for not being able to simply glamour Tony a Halloween look, Jack-the-Gripper hadn’t left any dents that went bone deep. Tony had gingerly pressed both sides of his face with his palms, so as not to disturb the bits of glued on beard, when he heard Ash clattering down the stairs.

"Look, dad! Look!" Ash ran into the living room where they gathered, with Natasha in tow. Jaw pain forgotten, his features involuntarily draw up into a rictus grin upon the sight of his son's costume.

"Okay then! Looking sharp for your first ever Halloween, Buddy. Er...," Tony shot a dagged look at Natasha. With a voice that was that was pure candy-floss laced with razor blades, he asked. "And who exactly is Ash supposed to be?"

"Well---" Just as Natasha spoke up, Ash interrupted. "Daddy, can't you recognize my costume?"

"Of course your daddy recognized your costume, little Flame." Loki placed a soothing hand on Tony's back, rubbing small circles to comfort his shocked partner, "Daddy is just surprised by the transformation. You look so real, we nearly didn’t know it was you.”

Chapter End Notes

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Really Nat? Really?

Chapter Summary

Only Natasha would think this was a good idea.

Chapter Notes

Double update!

Beta'd by the most splendiferous Stella! Aka Ykmust! After beta'ing I change things. So all mistakes are a 'my bad'. :D

Keep an eye out on tumblr. I commissioned a picture for this chapter from Batwynn. She should be posting it sometime today. If you decide to check it out, you might also want to check out her Pateron Page. <http://batwynn.tumblr.com/>

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)



<http://rennemichaels.tumblr.com/post/132161529533/batwynn> (Graphic Permalink to see it in its full glory)

Chapter 9 – Really Nat? Really?

Oh hell no. The Red Menace had a lot of nerve dressing his son up as--

With a final soft pat, a wide eyed glare, and a more hearty warning nudge, Loki knelt down, holding out his hands to the mini-super soldier. "It is almost as if Captain Rogers was in the room with us." Lifting both of the kid's hands in his, Loki made a show of admiring Aśbrand's costume. "Have you thanked Lady Natasha?"

"Thank you, Lady Natasha." Aśbrand called over his shoulder, craning his neck to see the red head.

"No problem, Cap," Natasha said, mirroring the kid's wide grin with one of her own, and giving him a snappy little two finger salute to the brow.

Wishing he had dressed up in his own suit so he could shoot real lasers at Natasha, Tony glared. And then as he took in the full glory of the tiny Captain America in front of him, started mentally reciting a Cascadic Multigrid Algorithm. Backwards.

"Look, Daddy! Lady Natasha even gave me a *shield*." Holding the patriotically painted disk up for inspection, in a way that blocked Natasha's view of his face, Aśbrand whispered to Tony in a voice

loud enough for the neighbors to hear, "Don't tell Lady Natasha that I know, but it's not real Vibranium. I had Jarvis scan it. It's only High Impact Polystyrene."

Okay, so maybe any time Ash broke into Pip-Squeak-Science-Speak it totally made Tony's day. But that didn't mean he wasn't still pissed at the super spy for dressing his kid up as Captain Spangles. However, Tony knew there was a time and a place for revenge. And that time and place was not while your kid was watching. Or, while the mark was on guard against it. Besides, he was pretty sure he could talk Loki into helping. And that would make for an epic payback appearing out of nowhere. And be one that Red would not soon forget.

Loki snapped a picture. And then ignoring Tony's outraged glare tapped his phone a few times to send it, Norse God Knows where.

"And look, daddy, I can block her bullets! Watch!" Ash then turned to beam at Natasha.

"Yes, you surely can, Cap." Natasha said as Ash took a stance, crouching down with his face half hidden behind the shield. She drew out a black plastic gun with a red tipped barrel and shot a few yellow foam pellets at the kid. Complete with little 'phew phew' noises.

Which Tony had to admit was really cute and all that. However, he was still not happy. As he ruffled his son's hair, he smiled at Nat. His smile, promising dire retribution in the future, was so sharp; it almost glittered under the light coming from the ceiling fixtures. Natasha, returned it mockingly, apparently unfazed by anything she thought Tony could throw at her. Despite his upset that Iron Man's son would dress as Captain America on his first Halloween outing, deep down Tony was almost gleeful. It had been years since Natasha had dealt with Tony and Loki working in concert, and she had never experienced Team FrostIron at its full strength. Asgard had learned to fear them, and Tony would be lying if he said he wasn't looking forward to teaching SWORD, and their top agent, the same lesson.

"Anthony, are you quite alright?" Frigga asked, her eyes dancing with amusement.

"What? Yeah, yeah, I'm fine. Totally fine." He exchanged a knowing glance with Loki. Something he was pleased to note caused the red head's eye's to narrow microscopically, particularly when Loki gave Tony a small nod of acknowledgement.

"Oh, Anthony," Teased the Queen of Asgard, seemingly well aware of cause of Tony's parental distress. "I am sure the Captain of America is as much a celebrated hero as the Iron Man is, there is no need to be jealous."

Okay. Despite finding his pain to be a source of humor, Mother-in-law just earned kudos for saying 'Iron Man' instead of 'Man of Iron' like her oldest. Speaking of which... Point Break seldom missed a family outing with his favorite nephew.

"Not jealous," Tony lied through his teeth, looking over the top of his Ironman disguise sunglasses with a deliberately fake smile. "By the way, where is Thunderbird?" Tony asked, raising his voice a bit, as Ash and Natasha played Cap'n Spangles and Spy Barbie around the dining room table in the adjoining room. He flashed a pointed look at one of Jarvis' many cameras, before casting his eyes back towards the dining room, hoping his favorite A.I. would get the hint and record the adorable scene slash blackmail material.

"Thor is a prince with many duties." The words, '*unlike you*' practically flashing above the All Father's head. Tony hid a smirk at having goaded Odin into foregoing his precious kingly silence to educate his least favorite in-law. "And, as I believe I have mentioned numerous times before, I would appreciate you addressing my son with his proper name."

Like that was ever going to happen, Tony thought glancing down curiously as his cell phone pinged. Who the hell Jarvis was letting message him?

<Bucky> Nice costume you got there Tin Man. P.s. Tell the Kid Steve loves his outfit.

Tony hastily slid his sunglasses up, hiding his rolling eyes from sharp eyed relatives. Putting his phone away, he returned his attention to the cranky cyclops in front of him.

"My son was accompanying Lady Jane on a summit when he was summoned back to Asgard to sit on the throne. He will look after the Golden Realm while her King and Queen, personally look into this matter of a pagan reli---" Sweet smile still firmly in place, Figga delicately elbowed Odin's side with enough force to make the king lurch sideways.

Unseen behind his sunglasses, Tony rolled his eyes again. *Points deducted Odin House for interrupting his daughter-in-law's plans. He hoped, she hadn't been delivering a paper or anything.* Not that the old one eyed bastard would have cared. He didn't think Jane should have any interests outside of Asgard. Or Tony either, for that matter.

"Nat, when is the neighbor kid coming over to meet Ash?" Tony said loud enough to be heard over the battle going on around the dining room table. Totally running right over whatever Odin was just about to say.

Okay, so points deducted from Stark House again for being rude to the F-I-L.

Like Tony cared.

Ash stopped playing with Natasha at the question, grinning happily and wiping sweat from his forehead with the back of his hand. Apparently authentic Captain America costumes didn't breathe very well.

Which wouldn't happen if Ash was wearing a custom made mini Iron Man suit. That would have been temperature controlled after all.

Natasha gave both Loki and Tony a skeptically arched eyebrow, but merely said, "Actually Tony, you three have to go over there to meet them." She glanced over his shoulder at the oversized clock hanging in the living room. "And I would say now would be a good time to grab our goodie bags, and depart."

Chapter End Notes

As always comments and reviews are greatly appreciated, even if it is a simple I loved YYY, or ZZZ confuses me. They let me know which part is catching your attention. If you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

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The whole bag of candy

Chapter Summary

Odin finds someone who talks faster than Tony. He is not impressed.

Chapter Notes

Beta'd by the most splendiferous Stella! Aka Ykmust! After beta'ing I change things.
So all mistakes are a 'my bad'. :D

Unlike my other stories, I really don't have anything in mind for this 'verse. So suggestions and prompts are welcome. I may not use them, but I will think about them.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter – 10 The whole bag of candy

“I am famous, you know,” Tony grumbled under his breath as they were getting ready to leave. Nat ignored his mumbling and kept trying to hand him a small cloth square. It looked suspiciously like a folded up pillow case.

“Not tonight you aren’t.” She gestured towards the material that Tony was glaring at, but not accepting from her. “Really, Stark? Just take it, will you? You’ll need it later or the weight of the kid’s candy bucket will cut into his hand.”

Tony wrinkled up his nose, still refusing to hold out his hand, even when Nat growled at him. “Tony. Take the damn sack and stick it in your marsupial pouch. Or I will find someplace less pleasant to stuff it.”

oOOo

Fortunately for Tony, before Nat could make good on her threat, Loki huffed, and grabbed the sack, which they later did find out was indeed one of the lair’s Jours de Paris pillow cases, and stuffed it in Tony’s hoodie pouch.

Their Vanir, Einherjar, and SWORD security detail exited through the alley to spread out around the neighborhood as inconspicuously as they could in groups of three. That being a lost cause in Tony’s opinion. Marji, one of Loki’s guards and a sword agent were in charge of handing out candy. And he supposed making sure no dastardly folks invaded the house and set up an ambush while they were gone. Loki was in charge of supervising a last minute potty break. Authentic Captain America outfits having totally different types of fasteners than Ash was used too using. Tony briefed the in-laws out on the front porch. “Look, just stand here and pretend not to be Space Vikings, we’ll go grab the neighbor kids and swing back to get you. If the neighbor comes out, just wave and try to look normal. ‘kay?”

Not that Tony had any great hopes of that. While Jarvis had done an excellent job of finding them

examples of mortal, or rather muggle, grandparent gear to glamour themselves with. There was still something just not Earthgardian about them. Starting of course with Odin's eye patch, which had somehow escaped being glamourised to look more normal.

Oh well. They tried. If Ash ended up scarred for life, Tony consoled himself that it wouldn't be his fault.

OoooO

Operation Get More Kids went okay. Harried neighbor lady remembered Tony's, or rather Tonio's cousin, Natasha, from all the visits she'd made over the years to check up on the house while it had sat empty. Baby in hand, she came out on her porch to see her kids off and did indeed wave at the in-laws. And if Odin's wave looked more like something the Queen of England would do, rather than Grampa Joe, at least he smiled.

Tony made a mental note to check into exactly why Natasha had kept tabs on the Lair. And exactly how deep her background checking had gone on the area and its inhabitants.

Ash was in new best buddy heaven. Jeffy, the neighbor boy who was a sturdily built towhead, had just turned seven, so he was only a year older than Ash. If still slightly shorter, But then Ash took after Loki height wise. Jeffie's equally blonde sister Darla, was maybe two years younger.

As for Loki? Or rather, Lorraine? Tony wasn't quite sure what was going on there. There was no arguing that Loki was a great parent, much better than Tony in fact. Though he would never admit it our loud.

However, Lorraine totally threw herself into the whole completely mortal thank you, no one is royal here honest, parenting thing. So much so that it was actually a little scary. Checking and adjusting masks so little eyes could see, holding small hands when they crossed the streets. Showing Darla how to hold the voluminous skirts of her Belle costume when walking up and down the stairs so she wouldn't step on them. And much to Tony's amusement, she even made Odin and Frigga demonstrate for Jeffy the proper way to bow and kiss a lady's hand. When she encouraged him to take his King Arthur costume to the next level, with some of the older ladies answering the doors, that trick that garnered the kid a lot of extra candy.

And it wasn't just with the kids; Lo introduced herself, and the rest of them, to almost everyone on their long block. Chatting up the neighbors, and extracting information about each house with such speed and skill that Natasha was probably taking notes.

About three blocks into their evening, no doubt to the dismay of their distance security, a ninja squirmed his way between Odin and Frigga yelling for Jeffy to wait up. Loki and the kids, who were a few yards ahead of them, turned to see what the commotion was all about.

Ninja boy screeched to a halt, stopping so abruptly that Tony almost ran into him. "Whoah!" The kid breathed, looking up at Loki-Thranduil in awe.

Bending over to get a closer look, Loki's curtain of black hair almost brushed against her newest admirer. "And who might you be?" She asked with a delighted tinkling laugh, the one that always reminded Tony of glass wind chimes.

"That's Vince," Jeffy piped up happily, which was a good thing, because Vince didn't look like he was going to be capable of speech for a bit. "He's in my class. And that's his sister Debbie. They just moved here." Jeffy pointed to a bored looking older girl. The teen, in a slightly too adult version of Hermione Granger was threading her way, with muttered excuses, between Odin,

Frigga.

Once he'd finally gotten over being star-struck by Loki, it turned out that Vince was a talkative kid, who knew how to make friends quick. Within five minutes they knew that his dad worked construction, and they rented an apartment from old Mister Harris.

This, much as he tried to hide it, came as a big surprise to Ash. After all, in his world, everyone lived in a manor, tower, or palace. Tony could see the wheels turning in the kid's head as he tried to reconcile the buildings they were passing having more than one family in them. But fortunately, before he could do more than exchange a puzzled look with Loki, Vince was explaining that they only ever rented because when the sky scraper his dad was working on was finished, his family would move to wherever the next job was. Although sometimes if they weren't ready for his dad, they'd go live with Gramma Sharon for a while, and he'd go to school there.

Okay then. Tony didn't need to know about Gramma Sharon's dog, but what the heck.

Loki and Natasha escorted the four kids up the half flight of steps to the next door, Every house in this neighborhood having daylight basements. Many of them no doubt containing apartments like the one Vince's family rented. Hooker Hermione, choose to wait a few steps further down on the sidewalk, chatting with a mini-skirted goth vampire, who was obviously in one of her classes.

"The boy talks faster than you do," Odin grouched to Tony.

Which Tony had to admit he did.

The kids were making their third candy dump into adult held pillow cases, Odin and Frigga having been volunteered to carry the ones supplied by Jeffy and Darla's mom, when the motor mouthed ninja turned to Ash and asked, "Do you want to come to my birthday party? Jeffy is already coming. I could have my mom send you an invitation."

The world stopped spinning for just a moment, as all of Ash's Christmases came at once. He was on Earth, trick-or-treating like a regular kid, he'd met and talked to dozens of other kids over the course of the evening, he had a pillow case half full of candy, and now he'd been invited to a real kid's birthday party. His face lit up more than the streetlights that Frigga had been boosting all evening. The happiness on his son's face as he looked to Loki for permission frankly made Tony a bit misty eyed. Something his sharp eyed spouse would not have noticed, if it hadn't been for Frigga meddling with the street lights. The damn things were now bright enough that they rivaled the ones Yankee Stadium used for night games.

OoooO

Something was up. And by the end of the night, even Odin and Frigga knew it. Ash was beaming even after they'd left Vince and Debbie off about a block from the Lair. Even as he and Jeffy chattered about the various costumes they were passing, he kept shooting adoring looks up at his mother. Who didn't say a word, but just did that curly smirk of hers. And absolutely refused to give Tony any hints on to what the hell was going on, no matter what he hissed at her.

"Language, Tony," Frigga reminded him, glancing pointedly at the little princess half asleep in her arms. Natasha having handed the child over to her, and vanishing a block or so ago. Loki did make a point of telling Harried Mom, how well the two siblings had gotten along, and how impressed she was that Jeffy watched out for, and took such good care of his little sister.

Once back at the Lair, Odin went to speak to the returning guards down in the basement rec room. While Frigga took Ash's candy into the kitchen where Marji was waiting for her with a cup of tea.

And Loki? Loki swung Ash up in her arms and breezed right up two flights of stairs and directly to the master bedroom, a confused Tony following closely behind.

“Okay you two,” he said the minute he’d shut the bedroom door. “What’s going on here?”

“Do you want to tell him?” Loki asked, sharing a wide smile with her son as he hugged her delightedly.

“Daddy, we’re moving to Midgard!” Ash yelled, in a voice so loud it that made Tony glad the master bedroom was a third floor attic conversion.

“Uh huh.” Not that this wasn’t something that Tony had been wanting to do for years, but as an engineer focused on practicality, just off the top of his head he could think of several problems. Shoving his sunglasses in hoodie pocket, Tony unzipped the fleece jacket, shrugged it off and tossed it on a nearby dresser.

Tony couldn’t help but wonder why it was that when your dearest dream was handed to you, it always came wrapped in layers of problems and tied off with a ribbon made up of snakes. “Okay. Let us say for the sake of argument we do this,” He rubbed his eyes tiredly, and then held his hands out for Ash. “And I just want to go on record as being totally on board with this idea, in principle at least.” This earned him an enthusiastic hug from his son.

“I love you Daddy.” Ash cooed in a tiny, only slightly manipulative voice as he squirmed around until he could bury his face against Tony’s neck.

“Yeah. And I love you too buddy, but we have discussed this before. Right?” Tony queried, as small hands twisted themselves into his t-shirt. After an exasperated glare at Loki, Tony bounced his shoulder. And while Ash obediently lifted his head to look at Tony, the kid was working his puppy dog eyes for all he was worth. A technique he’d obviously learned from his mother. However, as Tony had been dealing with far worse manipulative behavior from the original Trickster god, for a good deal longer than Ash had been alive, it totally wasn’t working.

Eyes, shining and full of hope, Ash gave him a tremulous little smile.

Okay. *It totally **was** working. But still.*

And yes, Tony was well aware that that he possibly turned into the soppiest girl in the nine realms, when confronted by the possibility of unhappiness from either member of his little family. How could he not be aware of it? Rodney and Pepper were constantly pointing it out to him.

“So? What are we going to do if you don’t grow up at the same rate as the other kids?” While his question was addressed to Ash, Tony shot a glance at Loki. Who strangely, did not seem even slightly worried. This was odd, since this had been a concern in several conversations they’d had over the years. After all, how traumatic would it be if they had to up and leave someplace, just as the poor kid was making friends?

“Vince has moved lots of times, Daddy. We can move somewhere else, and I’ll make new friends like he does.” Ash assured him earnestly. Surprised, Tony ignored the scimitar sharp grin Loki was sporting; instead he made a mental note to have Jarvis find out exactly what kind of subcontractor Ninja Dad was. If they ended up in Malibu rather than the tower, it might be worth his while to scare up some work for the guy. DeLuca senior had obviously raised a fairly well adjusted and incredibly resilient kid.

Hell, Tony couldn’t ever remember ever feeling anything but gut wrenching anxiety when faced

with his parents moving him around the damn country. Unlike his younger self, it appeared he and Loki might be raising a well-adjusted, resilient kid of their own. And no, Tony wasn't getting all emotional or anything. Even if he did rub his eyes because they were tired after setting his son down on the room's wall to wall mocha carpet.

Tony Stark's kid was on the road to being well adjusted. Who knew, right?

Perhaps his bastard partner? The one watching him with eyes slit in amusement like a particularly self-satisfied cat?

"Okay. Okay. We could do that I suppose." Reaching out an arm he snagged Loki around the waist, and tottered over and flopped down to sit on the bed. It had been a long day and he wasn't getting any younger after all. Of course he really wasn't getting much older, but that was beside the point right now. He tugged his god down to sit beside him. It took about half a second for Ash to decide he wanted in on the hugs and crawl up on Tony's knee, wrapping himself with the arm raised to receive him. "So," Tony drawled, knowing that while he was missing some major gotchas, like what was going to happen to Sir George the Dragon for instance. But for the main part, plan Earthward-ho was a go. "Tower or Malibu? Now, I personally prefer--"

"HERE!"

Tony almost fell off the edge of the bed.

"Ash... Buddy... What has daddy told you about the brain piercing shrieks?" Tony asked with a wince. Loki made tch'ing noises at their son, and soothing noises at Tony.

"Sorry daddy." Ash was apologetic. Or what passed for socially polite contriteness for about a tenth of a second. Before the kid returned, like a bulldozer on a deadline to the topic at hand. Not a trait he'd picked up from Tony no matter what Rudolf claimed. Howard maybe, but not Tony. Or at least that is what Tony told himself for perhaps the thousandth time, with admittedly more than a bit of a disconnect from reality.

"I wanna live here! Móðir would let us."

"And here would be fine," Tony lied. Internally shuddering at the very thought. "Unfortunately, this place is just too small. Where would we put Marji, Esja, Skjálfr, and Aldfrig?" While they might leave some or most of them behind while visiting Earth briefly, Tony knows there is no way they could permanently relocate without them and the rest of their assorted minions. After all, he'd gotten used to having the third housemaid pick up his clothes from the bedroom floor everyday.

"I own the house next door."

Tony shuddered, as Loki's words dropped down his spine like a bucket of ice cubes. And when the fuck did that happen? And how did it happen without Tony knowing about it? He was willing to bet it was like how they suddenly ended up with that damn big assed dacha in Álfheimr. Some sort of payment for a special favor he imagined. Not that Loki would ever tell him, except in exchange for one of Tony's secrets.

"And there is a secret tunnel that runs from this basement to that one."

Of course there was.

Ignoring the accusing look Tony was throwing at him, Loki continued. "And I understand that the lady in the house on the other side of this one, would like to go live closer to her son in California," her brows furled, "San Jose, I believe. But she can't afford to buy a place there."

Lowering his head and looking up from under his brows Tony asked sarcastically, “*You understand?*” Loki shrugged.

“Daddy, you could buy that house. Right?”

“Indeed, your daddy could.” Laying her head on his shoulder, Loki looked up at Tony with an open innocent expression that didn’t fool Tony one damn bit. He glared suspiciously as Loki worked her best doe-eyes, and then turned the same suspicious regard upon his heir.

“Okay,” Tony demanded. “So when did you two hash this all out? ‘Cause I know it wasn’t before we got here this afternoon.”

“There was normally a wait for our turn to go down the stairs at each house. The boys were in front of us, Agent Romanoff and Darla were behind us.” Loki’s lips did the curly thing again. “If you had come with up to the doors with us, instead of waiting at the bottom of the steps like a slug, you would have known this.”

Tony chose to ignore the slug crack. He decided he had more important things to do than get into a snipe fest, over his level of daily physical training. Or lack thereof.

“And what exactly is wrong with living in Stark Tower? Or Malibu for that matter? Or hell, anywhere else that we can buy a decent house?” His tone heavily implying that the one he was currently sitting would not, in his opinion, be considered decent. Fuck, it only had three tiny bathrooms, and one of them was in the basement.

Raising her head off his shoulder, amused, teasing, doe-eyed Loki faded away. It was a much colder voiced, harder eyed Loki who spoke next. “Our Flame already knows the gilded halls of privilege. On your realm as well as mine. Aśbrand wants to live where he isn’t surrounded by sycophants trying to curry our favor, or his. Tony and Loki Stark, Princes of Midgard and Asgard would not live here. Antonio Ingensønn, an engineering consultant, who works from home, assisted by his spouse Lorraine would. That would explain away your constant tinkering, and the coming and going of a number of people each day.”

Tony wanted to snort. As if people wouldn’t recognize him. He was Tony Stark after all. “Yeah, I can see that happening. People not recognizing me? And what about you? Are you going to stay female the whole time we’re here?” Tony knew there was no way in Helheim that was going to happen. Loki had a very limited tolerance for being female when no happy times were involved.

Head swiveling like he was at a tennis match, Ash had been closely watching them with increasing distress during their argu—discussion. Loki reached out and stroked a soothing hand down the boy’s cheek.

“Tony, you know I have been glamouring your appearance for years to appear slightly older when we visit Midgard. The only thing anyone might suspect is that you are the product of one of Tony Stark’s long ago one night stands. As for my appearance?” Tapping Ash’s cheek one last time, Loki waved her hand negligently down her form. “This body is so close to my own, I doubt anyone will notice when I go from a tall androgynous female to a tall androgynous male. After all, my appearance is not near as well known as yours,” She shrugged as swirls of green enveloped her face for a moment, leaving behind a pair of no nonsense glasses, and a short cap of riotous dark curls.

A short cap of curls, that left a long slender neck exposed, as it almost never was.

Tony pulled a face and then gave up. Why the fuck not? It wasn’t like he *wanted* to live in Asgard.

It was getting out of Space Viking land that was the hard part. And, he could always keep pushing for Malibu after all. “You know what? It works for me. Buddy, why don’t you go tell grand sire the good news while your Móðir and I visit for a minute.”

OoooO

Of course, when a pretty rumped, kiss bruised Tony and Loki descended to the living room, long before either of them had wanted to, Odin was not happy. But the important thing was that it was that special kind of ‘lets-not-upset-the-kid’ unhappy. Predictably, Odin and Loki did a lot of huffing at each other, while Ash drank hot chocolate behind the closed kitchen door with Marji and his nurse.

“My child wishes to live on Midgard,” Loki said, her voice calm, but her chin lifted at a determined angle. “A place where the ratio of children to adults is not skewed due to the much lower birthrate of an immortal race. Since he only has one childhood, he can well spend it here.”

“And if he becomes enamored with the wretched place?” Odin growled.

“Then he will spend several decades here.” The shrug was indifferent, but the hard gleam in Loki’s eyes told them all she meant business. “However, should that occur, I have no doubt that when his childhood friends start dying off, he will be happy to return to the Realm Eternal. Glad even, to be able to live where such heartbreak is much more rare.” Loki smiled wickedly. “Perhaps you should be leaning on Thor and his Jane to have children. I dare say a few cousins would be quite the draw to get him back to Asgard. Or Fandral needs to get serious and finally settle down with Hariasa. Her family throws off children quite as easily as Volstagg’s does.”

While Frigga tch’d, she did not really look like she disagreed that it was past time for Thor to start giving her more grandchildren. And from the little nods here and there during the conversation, she also looked like she was inclined to have a little chat with Fandral as well.

“He is in the line of succession.” Odin’s tone was driven. And Tony thought the flaring nostrils were a nice ‘I-am-so-serious’ touch. Loki apparently couldn’t give a single fuck. Which Tony had to admit, was an attitude that really worked with the whole crown and high bitch’ boots she was wearing.

“And? I am in the line of succession and I spent almost a century studying on Álfheimr.” Loki snapped irritably. “For Ymir’s sake, Thor apprenticed with the Master Armorer for fifteen years because he wanted to make his own vambraces. Why should Aśbrand not be allowed to do the same? It isn’t like he won’t be continuing his studies long past what the mortals consider customary.” Winding a hand in Tony’s, Loki pulled him close.

“Additionally, Tony’s closest companions are not getting any younger.” She raised a brow, “So unless you are going to start bestowing apples or servitor marks to all and sundry they will be dead soon. If he is going to spend time with them before they pass, it needs to be now.”

Tony had not expected that. Especially knowing what Loki thought about everyone besides Pepper and Rhodey. Or rather, Rhodey’s wife Denise. Honestly? He constantly was pushing aside thoughts of how everyone was aging while he wasn’t.

Odin opened his mouth as if to argue, but closed it with a snap, turning instead to Frigga, silently asking her, in that way of long term spouses, to reason with ‘her son’. Or daughter, as the case might be at this moment.

“Loki. We would not want our Little Sword to grow estranged from Asgard. Nor you either my

darling, you've only just returned to us."

"No one said we wouldn't return to visit. At least once a month to keep an eye on the estates and our businesses," Tony said with a smirk, knowing that Odin was all for the visiting and less thrilled about their various socially disruptive commercial endeavors. "And having the grandparents drop in for dinner or an overnight visit now and then is kinda an Earthgardian tradition after all."

Not necessarily one Tony approved of, but still.

Odin looked perhaps a touch less irritated. As much as he didn't want to, Tony had to admit the old bastard had a soft spot the size of Texas for his only grandson. Not that Odin knew how big Texas was. Or even what it was. Seeing him wavering, Tony decided to throw in the big bribe, something he'd been thinking about proposing to Loki soon anyhow. "Besides," he said slyly, earning himself a narrowed eye glare from his beloved. "Another Earthgardian tradition is occasionally sending kids to spend the weekend with the grandparents, so the parents can have a little adult time."

Odin and Frigga exchanged a long thoughtful glance. Then Odin looked calculatingly at the two of them.

While Tony was sure they hadn't heard the last of it, he was willing to bet the All Father was going to at least try to reconcile his preferences with his grandson's desires. Tony just wished he could be there when the old bastard found out they weren't going to be living in the Tower or Malibu, but rather in the dump that was the Lair.

Odin and Frigga took Aldfrig, and Marji back with them to get the packing started on Asgard. It took maybe another hour to sort out the servants and the details. Skjálfr took Ash up to what was going to be his permanent room. Then she and was going to temporarily bunk down in the bedroom beside it, while a handful of Loki's guards would bunk down in the basement's rec room. All their overflow guards and servants would be housed in the tower until Pepper could buy the house beside them, and make arrangements to clear Loki's tenants out of the one on the other side of them. They didn't have any kids, so a year's free rent and moving expenses should do the trick there.

Tony was busy making lists of crap that needed taken care of. And ignoring Director Coulson's increasingly irritated calls, when Loki grabbed his hand and yanked him up off the couch. Protesting Tony was dragged up the stairs to the master suite on the third floor.

Boots, and crowns, and collars with leashes were on the program for the rest of the evening. Not that he was complaining or anything. As for why Loki had not shaped shifted back to male as soon as they got home? Apparently a baby sister had also been added to their agenda.

And you know what? Tony was perfectly okay with that too.

~Boo~

The Halloween Story it be **fini**, the following chapters will be One Shots as they occur to me.

Chapter End Notes

Again, if you want to see this 'verse go anywhere else, do let me know. I won't be revisiting it unless a plot bunny bites me.

Last Name Ingensønn used with hicstan's kind permission.

As always comments and reviews are greatly appreciated, even if it is a simple I loved YYY, or ZZZ confuses me. They let me know which part is catching your attention. If you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

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Leaves aren't the only thing falling

Chapter Summary

Director Colson is not happy with Sir George. And that worries Tony. Honestly. It does.

Chapter Notes

Here is to a great 2016. There is a saying that what ever you do on New Year's Eve you will do the rest of the year... So. I am of course posting and sending items out to be Beta'd in the hopes that it will translate into a productive fic writing year in 2016.

Beta'd by Stella (Ykmust) with many thanks for all her great suggestions.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 11 - Leaves aren't the only thing falling.

Money made all things possible. Money mixed with magic made them possible much faster. Despite SWORD, and certain high ranking officials of the United States government having kittens, Tony's little family and his not so little entourage had successfully made the transition to New Jersey in just under a month. Odin had of course been livid at how abruptly they translocated, but he had managed to hide it from his grandson. Besides, they would be heading back to Asgard for Yule, so as far as Tony was concerned, the one eyed bastard could just take a freaking chill pill. Or five.

As far as the neighbors and the people living in Loki's rental were concerned, Marji, its long absent owner needed it back immediately because she was moving back to the States to start up a catering business. The couple residing there was of course dismayed at having to move after spending several years in the house. However, their lease was up in three months, which meant they would have had to move soon anyway. Tony offered them a generous resettlement package, which included four months of free rent in a luxury furnished apartment in NYC, and all-expense paid move that included packing, short term storage, and eventual re-delivery to their new place. But even with that, at first it looked like the husband might refuse, not wanting the fuss of moving during the holidays.

However, after Darcy and one of her minions, *yes Darcy had her own minions now*, took the couple on the tour of the exclusive building they would be temporarily living in, and pointed out all the nearby dining and entertainment that they could well afford with the money they were saving on rent, the wife was sold. From conversations overheard, apparently she was planning on having members of their distant family visit for a 'real' New York City vacation, as well as hosting several holiday parties for their friends and co-workers. So with the addition of an industrial kitchen and laundry facility in the rental's basement, that was Marji and the servants taken care of.

The house on the other side of them was even easier. Darcy 'Incognito', went over and spent the afternoon chatting with the owner, Mrs. Gellona. Two cups of tea, a couple of cookies and a

conference call to the woman's son, and it was a done deal. Four days later the son and daughter-in-law flew in, the paperwork was signed, and the family spent the next day directing the guys packing and loading their moving van. The sun was just setting as the moving van left, and an ecstatic old lady headed toward the airport for a first class trip with her family to a new life in sunny California. The next morning heralded the arrival of a construction crew to start building loft beds with secure storage areas underneath, and kitting out the basement as a training room for their security detail. With two guards per room, their quarters were not near as good as their Asgardian digs, but if Tony was going to have to rough it, so were they.

Apparently, the ever inventive Darcy put out the word that the house had been bought by a multinational security company, as temporary housing for their trainees.

Those were the parts of the move that money made easier. The magic part? That was the ramped tunnel that appeared by magic to link all three houses together. As well as the spell that tracked down the cracked pipe causing slow drains in the new house, and the warding that frankly bested any security system that Tony could have installed. *Not that he wasn't installing one anyhow as a backup*, and not incidentally as a link for Jarvis.

With much effort on everyone's part, the moon of Tony's delight and the fruit of his loins, along with a pared down selection of staff and guards were installed in the various houses. All without anyone in the neighborhood realizing that the three households were associated with each other.

And the only thing Tony had to say about that... Was the sooner he talked Bambi and the Bambino into moving into a real house, the better he would feel about it. As witnessed by his recent conversation with James.

OoooO

He was taking advantage of what was probably the last nice day before winter moved in with a vengeance. Tony, warm enough in a black wool pea coat and blue jeans, had ventured out on this brisk, yet lovely day to buy his beloved a present with his own two little hands. Doing it personally, being an action worth quite a few more *good hubby* points, than if he just had Jarvis order the damn things delivered.

Fate having decided that Tony Stark, of all people, would be married to someone who venerated '*paper*' books meant that Tony had started his day by heading to the Met to pick up an exhibition catalog of Bartholomeus Spranger, which they were holding for him in the gift shop. And a pop-up book of Gods & Heroes as a spur of the moment gift for Ash, for when they were with the in-laws for Yule. And not just because Tony was looking forward watching Odin's expressions as grandson and grand sire leafed through it. At least, not that he would admit to.

After leaving the Met, Tony decided to do a little more Loki Shopping. Because, Christmas presents aside, it never hurt to replenish the Bambi bribe-stash he kept in the safe of his workshop. As he was getting into his car, Tony debated on where to have his driver take him next. He was torn between getting some jewelry or a few Berluti silk and cashmere scarves. But, he had no sooner closed the car door, when his pocket started belting out '*Fly Like An Eagle*' by the Steve Miller Band.

"Take us around the block a few times," he instructed the driver over the PA system before hitting the privacy switch and pulling out his phone with a smile. "Rhodey, buddy, what's shaking."

"Hey Tony. Denise and I are going to be in town next week, and we thought if you weren't busy, we might stop by to see how you are settling into the *Lair*." There was more snicker in his buddy's voice than Tony thought was warranted, especially with that dramatic reading of the word 'Lair'.

“Yeah? That’s great.” And it really was. Denise and Loki got along well, and Tony adored showing Denise a good time, if only because it set the bar so high for Rhodey. And honestly? He was glad to be sliding into the lives of his Earth Bound friends so easily after being gone for the better part of seven years. “We can meet up at the penthouse and go out on the town. There’s a new restaurant in the Flatiron district we’ve been meaning to go to.”

Rhodey laughed. “That sounds wonderful, Tony, but we really just wanted to stop by your new place. Shoot the breeze, drop off a house warming gift, order takeout and just hang out for a while.”

Fuck

Tony could feel his smile fading away. “Seriously, you don’t. I’m telling you. There is **nothing** to see there. I think Denise would be happier with a little wining and dining in an exclusive restaurant. One, I might mention, that an asshole like you couldn’t possibly ever hope to ever get a reservation at.” Unless of course he had Jarvis get it for him, which Tony’s AI had been more than happy to do on numerous occasions.

“Ha! You would think so, wouldn’t you?” Rhodey retorted, not even bothering to hide how much he was laughing at his billionaire friend. “But then, you would be wrong. As your best friend, I can get reservations just fine asshole. But right now, we are both super excited to see what the great Tony Stark can do when he is trying to get a regular house up to his exacting, over-the-top standards.”

“I hate you both,” Tony muttered. “But I hate **you** so bad that during your next suit upgrade, I am going to give your system AI a high-pitched Japanese school girl’s voice.” Or, possibly a super breathy porn star? Barney? Alvin the Chipmunk? All of the above, in rotation? The opportunities to torture Rhodey via the suit were frankly endless.

Not that the bastard seemed to worry about it, Tony thought sourly.

“Pfff. Yeah. Whatever.” Rhodey said dismissively, not at all impressed with Tony’s threats. “Just send me the address.”

“Fine.” Tony fussed as he tapped out and sent his loathed new address. “If you want to come to Jersey, rather than a five star restaurant, I am sure I don’t care.” *Much.*

“Got it.” Rhodey said a moment later. Then after a brief pause, “Very funny, Tony. Send me the real address.”

“That is the real address. Do you think I would lie about living on Neptune Street, in New Jersey?” Tony gritted. Annoyed at both Rhodey’s denseness, **and** the other call Jarvis was trying to send through to him. Canceling the new call notification, Tony could hear keys tapping on the other end of the line.

“You expect me to believe Tony Stark is living in a house with a one car garage? In New Jersey?” Apparently, Rhodey had just Googled the location. “I mean, we knew you said you were roughing it, but Tony, I honestly thought you were joking.”

“Unfortunately, I wasn’t. I am living in a working class neighborhood in New Jersey, which I guess means the joke’s on me.”

There was a long low whistle on the other end of the line. “Whoa. I’ve said it before, but I’ll say it again. You are one whipped mother fucker, Tony.”

“Tell me about it.” Tony sighed as Jarvis signaled yet again that he had a call from SWORD waiting.

“Look, Rhodey, Just send me your dates okay? I’ve got to go. SWORD is on the other line, and apparently their panties are in a bunch this afternoon.”

“Alright. Call me if it’s anything important. See ya next week.”

As Rhodey disconnected, Tony rapped on the window dividing the passenger section from the driver, and made a few circle motions. Sitting back again, he tapped on Jarvis’ symbol. “Jarvis, why are you allowing Director Agent to bug me?”

“I am sorry, Sir, but he insists on speaking with you.” Jarvis said apologetically.

“I said I’d call him later, didn’t I?” Tony said with a majorly diva-ish eye roll. Perhaps a habit rubbed off on him from his lovely godling.

“Indeed you did, Sir. Unfortunately your idea of 'later' is much different than his. Mainly in that yours often doesn’t occur.”

“That is a baseless falsehood, Jay.” Tony retorted, both of them knowing that it really wasn’t. He huffed. “Fine, put him through.” Tony heard a few tones and then a voice, which was well known for its ability to keep an even keel even when the giant flying ship he was on lost engine functions, spoke.

“Tell me about the bird, Stark.”

It had taken them long enough.

Tony fought back a snicker, his previous peevishness at being interrupted disappearing with his glee at the chance to do a bit of verbal sparring with his favorite agent. For a certain value of the word 'favorite' of course, Tony knew it wouldn’t do to get carried away with the warm fuzzies or anything.

“Well, it’s a Hyacinth Macaw, it’s blue, weighs about three and a half pounds, has exhibited tool use, but sadly hasn’t learned any words yet. But hey, it’s young.”

“A Hyacinth Macaw parrot?” Coulson asked skeptically.

“Yepper.” Tony replied, glad Coulson couldn’t see him grinning.

“I don’t think so, Stark. Parrots don’t, as a rule, breathe flames.”

Tony had wondered how long it would take someone to call him about this. He was frankly surprised Coulson hadn’t called him days ago. Either SWORD was getting sloppy, or something else had kept Coulson too busy to call earlier. Tony made a mental note to find out which it was, since he did depend on them for *some* of his intel.

“Yeah? ‘Bout that. Ash slipped George some chili the night before. Big mistake.”

“Bull. I understand that Sir George, aka, *not a dragon*, attacked two kids.”

“Well as I understand it, they were teens, not kids. And if they hadn’t upset *my* kid by beating and kicking a stray dog, the damn *bird* would have left them alone.”

“We can’t prove that, Stark. Not without drawing attention to who you, and your employees, really are.”

“You can prove it when the *bird* wears a min-cam collar. Shall I have Jarvis send you the video? Besides, those bastards are lucky George got to them before Ash’s nurse Skjálfr did. She would have broken those two sadistic fucking punks in half.”

A deep sigh wafted through the phone. “Where’s the dog now?”

“He’s at our vet. And when he gets released from there, he’s heading to the groomers, and after that, if he doesn’t get adopted some by nice retired couple, he’ll most likely go to one of Stark InterGalactic’s facilities and be paired up with one of the night guards. Providing the dog with nice long walks every evening and companionship for the guard.”

Tony paused thoughtfully a moment. “Come to think of it... It could possibly be the first *Schnoodle* that we’ve ever paired with one of our company’s security guards. But, whatever.”

“And no dog at your house to be eaten by Prince Loki’s giant cat, the one that caused us so much trouble getting an exotic animal exemption?” Coulson sighed. No doubt thrilled to be handling yet another issue for Haus Stark.

“Yes, that too,” Tony agreed cheerfully at this reminder of how excited all the various Earthgardian officials were to have him and his family back on earth.

“I don’t suppose there is any way I can convince you to keep the bird at home?”

“Nope.” Tony said, popping the ‘p’, “parrots that big need lots of exercise. And besides, it was all we could do to convince the *not-a-dragon* that he had to stay home while Ash was in school.”

fini

Chapter End Notes

This is my New Year's gift to you. What do I want? Well comments would be lovely.

But also? Suggestions and prompts. While it might have taken a while, I have always known where the rest of Queens Grace was going. The Palaces of Sand and Gold, not so much. Which I suppose makes sense since they started out with a prompt from jldw. Therefore...

Loki/Tony & Ash on Midgard prompts can be left here in the comment area of The Littlest Trickster.

Loki/Tony & Younger Ash in Asgard Prompts can be left in the comment area of Palaces of Sand and Gold

<http://archiveofourown.org/works/2398826/chapters/5303108>

I don't promise to use them all, but I will read them in the hopes that they jumpstart another chapter. :D

Ash has a Cunning Plan

Chapter Summary

It's hard to think of everything when you are only seven years old.

Chapter Notes

Beta'd by the wonderful Emu Sam.

This was written while I was sleep deprived. Do take that into account when you read it.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Ash has a Cunning Plan

It had taken a couple of days but Ash now had a plan. Or rather a ‘cunning plan,’ as Daddy always called it when they were trying to surprise Móðir. Even his really smart Daddy had a hard time surprising Móðir unless he had a ‘cunning plan’. And that was with Jarvis and Lady Pepper helping him.

However, Ash was pretty smart himself, *and* he had Vince and Debbie helping him. Vince because he one of Ash’s best friends, his older sister Debbie, not so much. But... Ash studied people like Móðir taught him. So he promised Debbie a sleepover for Vince at his house, the next time she had to babysit, but wanted to go out with her friends. But he didn’t sign anything, because Daddy always said paper trails were a bad word.

Almost giddy with excitement, Ash skipped in front of his nurse on the narrow walkway between Vince’s house and his neighbors. At the rear of the building, a short set of stone steps led to the basement apartment where the DeLuca’s were currently living. While it was kind of fun, swinging around the banister and hopping down the steps to their door, he wondered if they were really going to move to next month. He and Jeffy were hoping they bought the house Mrs. DeLuca liked. The red brick one, behind Ash’s house and a few yards over.

“Remember Aśbrand, Mister Harris doesn’t allow pets, so do not let Sir George into the house,” Skjálfr said, handing over his backpack.

His nurse could be so fussy sometimes, Ash thought, repressing a sigh as well as an eye roll. Experience, and the occasional time out, had taught him that Skjálfr didn’t think either action were nearly as funny as Daddy, Lady Darcy, or Uncle Thor did. And since he had managed to talk her into letting him spend the day at Vince’s, like a normal kid, **without** his nurse sitting in the kitchen while he played, he figured he better be good.

But Ash wasn’t stupid; he knew that one of Móðir’s guards would be watching the house. So as soon as Skjálfr left, they snuck out Debbie’s window, underneath some covered patio furniture she had stacked there, and pushed through the bushes into the next yard.

“You remember to bring bus money and cab fare?” Debbie asked, after they cut through two more back yards, and exited on the opposite street.

“Here,” Ash said, digging his Captain America wallet out of his backpack. It was packed so tight it sprang open the moment Debbie touched its Velcro strap.

“Why can’t my grandpa be a rich nut, that owns a big company, and gives hundreds of dollars to me,” the teen muttered as she riffled through the numerous bills. Pulling out three twenties, she sighed, and handed it back him. “Put that back and don’t lose it.”

Feeling like a whole flock of butterflies were in his tummy, Ash stuffed his wallet way down in his backpack and carefully zipped it closed. “Will it be enough?” He asked anxiously; he thought it would be, but he wasn’t really sure. He was still learning about Midgardian money. His parents, Jarvis, Lady Darcy or Skjálfr always paid for anything he wanted. Except, of course for stuff at school, or candy he bought on the way home from the park. He could add and subtract numbers just fine, but he was still learning about making change, especially if it was more than five dollars.

“Well, since we aren’t headed to Tiffany’s, I’d say so,” the teen told him, which instantly made Ash feel a lot better. “Look, if you two don’t waste time gawking once we get into the city, we won’t need to worry about saving money for a quick cab ride home. So, if we hurry, while we’re down in the concourse picking up my blouse, we can spend that money on lunch.”

YES!

Vince and Ash grinned at each other.

Bumping his shoulder and then punching the air with his fist, Vince shouted, “Messy sandwiches!”

“Flat messy sandwiches!” Ash echoed happily. Really messy sandwiches, toasted, with weird stuff in them that they had dared each other to eat.

“Right, fine. You guys stick close, keep walking, and we can probably eat at Witchcraft.”

Ash, Vince and Jeffy had loved when Daddy and Móðir had taken them skating at Christmas Tree Place. And... without Daddy being with them, maybe they wouldn’t get yelled at for howling during the big tunnel ride. He bumped Vince back so hard he almost stumbled into his sister. Laughing they jumped and tussled all the way to the bus stop.

OoooO

Darcy was at the printers picking out paper so the embassy's new stationary could be ordered, when her Bat Phone started ringing. Ok, so it was actually a Stark phone. But since it was her hotline that only the important people had the number for, she could call it the Bat Phone if she wanted to. And besides, she’d bought the coolest bat shaped case for it. Age appropriate phone accessories were something that happened to boring people as far as she was concerned. “Darcy Lewis, Chief Minion.”

“Lady Darcy,” Ash gulped loud enough that she could hear it over the phone, before continuing in a small and broken voice. “C—can you help? Please?”

“Little dude, what’s wrong?”

“They won’t let us go home.”

The hair stood up on the back of Darcy’s neck, and her heart started trying to pound its way out of

her chest.

“What?” she almost shrieked, waving frantically for Ian, her new British sub-minion. She frantically gestured for him to get close enough that he could also hear her phone. “Ash, who won’t let you go? Where are you? Whose cell are you using? Put Skjálfr on the phone,” she commanded, hoping against hope, that it was just yet another Asgard-Midgard misunderstanding for her to smooth over. Ian was trying to follow her, while still keeping his head ducked down close enough to hear her phone and dialing his own to call their driver. They tangled briefly in the doorway leading out to the building’s elevators.

“Skjálfr’s at home. We... snuck out,” Ash sniffed, his breath hitching. During the slight pause, Darcy could now make out people shouting in the background. “We’re by the Christmas Tree Place. We came to get Móðir a anna’versy present.”

“Are you alone?!” There was no *almost* this time, Darcy straight up shrieked, hitting notes she hadn’t managed since she was twelve. And no, she totally did not care that she almost deafened Ian. Or that she was scaring the shit out of the sprinkling of people riding in the elevator with them.

“No,” came a woe-begotten reply, “I’m with Vince and Debbie.” The shouting in the background grew shriller, until she heard a deep male voice proclaim that he was calling the cops.

Cops. Good. So not an abduction. Darcy could feel the frantic whirr of her heart wind down just a bit.

How in the hell, she wondered, with as many people keeping an eye on him as he had, seriously, just how the fuck did that damn kid get out of pocket? And who the hell was Vince? That wasn’t the name of the across-the-street kid that Ash played with. Ian was now talking rapidly to Tony on his own phone as the two of them spilled out of the building, dashed a few yards down the sidewalk, and then darted between the slow moving traffic towards the non-descript car honking its horn and flashing its lights. They didn’t even wait for the driver to pull up to the curb.

The minute the door closed, Ian yelled at him to get them to Rockefeller Center, NOW. Since Brit-Dude most likely had no clue where Christmas Tree Place was, Darcy imagined that Tony must have told him the name.

Trying to listen to the kid, Darcy was having a hard time concentrating. *Vince and Debbie? Wasn’t that...*

“Wait. Ash, are you talking about, sarcastic, hipster Debbie? The one with a little brother that lives on the next block?”

“Yes.” Straining so hard, she could almost hear the tears rolling down the kid’s face, she could certainly hear arguing going on behind him as a young female voice demanded Ash’s credit card back. Surely Stark had not given a credit card to a seven-year-old.

“What about George? Please tell me that Parrot Undercover is at least with you?” Darcy begged, knowing this was a long shot, but hoping.

“No. He had to stay in the tree at Vince’s house, s’Skjálfr wouldn’t know. Darcy, please help,” Ash begged breathlessly, “but don’t tell Móðir or Daddy.”

Yeah. Like that ship hadn’t already sailed.

“Little dude, I am so sorry, but we are way past keeping this from the ‘rents. Let me talk to big

sis.”

“Hey, who are you talking to?” Deep voice yelled. “Did you call your folks? Good, give that to me.”

“Noooooooooooo!” Ash wailed. Darcy heard a bunch of scuffling noises, a bit more yelling, and then the phone went dead.

tbc

Chapter End Notes

Part one of a little Valentine Day-ish 2-Shot for my lovely readers. It started out as a Valentine Day fic, but since I couldn't get it completely finished in time to be beta'd and posted in its entirety, I changed it to an Anniversary Fic.

Since I am not getting any chocolate or cards to day, :(a comment or two would be lovely.

Even if it is a simple I loved YYY, or ZZZ confuses me. They let me know which part is catching your attention. If you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

I don't own the Avengers or Thor, they are the property of Marvel and Disney, and are not my intellectual property. There is no financial gain made from this nor will any be sought. This is for entertainment purposes only.

Cunning Plan? Not so much

Chapter Summary

Tony arrives to save the day. But not until after Darcy gets there.

Chapter Notes

Look at you guys! So many lovely comments, I HAD to post the next chapter early.

Beta'd by the ever wonderful Emu Sam.

As I mentioned in the last chapter this was written while I was sleep deprived. Do take that into account when you read it.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Cunning Plan? Not so much

“Fuck.” Darcy said, “someone hung up.”

Ian shook his head. “Jarvis couldn’t track it down any further than midtown. Mister Stark is on his way.”

“Geeze. Tell Jarvis to check Ash’s credit card use. I’m going to try and call the kid back. You!” Smacking the back of the front seat, Darcy glared at the rear view window, meeting the driver’s startled glance. “Lights, siren, something, hurry this damn thing up.”

Turning back to her phone, Darcy ignored the man as he pulled a light from underneath his passenger seat and flicked a hidden switch. But before she could hit redial, her phone rang.

“Are you this kid’s parent? Do you know he has a credit card belonging to Tony Stark?” Deep voice demanded.

“Where are you?” Darcy snapped.

“I asked if this was your kid.” The voice barked. Darcy could hear someone; she supposed to be the older sister yelling something about a jewelry store on 50th Street.

“Where are you on 50th Street?” Darcy growled, poking the driver. He nodded, making little chirps with his siren and easing to the left lane. “And let me tell you buster, if you touch one hair on that kid’s head, his father is going to own you. That’s if you survive the wrath of gods that the kid’s mother and grandparents call down upon your head.”

Not too surprisingly, the situation became a lot clearer once Darcy got the shop owner’s undivided, if now slightly panicked, attention. During the fifteen minutes it took them to get to Ash’s location, Darcy managed to calm Ash down, sort of. He was still pretty upset, but at least now he knew the

cavalry was coming. And with the call on three-way to Jarvis, she grilled Deep Voice for information. Darcy had, for about a tenth of a second, thought about three-way-ing Tony, but decided Jarvis was the better bet. He at least didn't interrupt her while she was trying to do her thing.

Deep Voice however, was still upset. Originally he'd been upset because a trio of run-of-the-mill kids tried to use a supposedly stolen credit card in his store. Now he was upset that, instead of retrieving the great Tony Stark's credit card for him... He had possibly threatened distant Stark relatives, or children of a close family friend with arrest.

Not, he protested, that he had any way to know about that from the way the kids were dressed. A point, Darcy had to concede, since when Loki decided the family was going to blend, they blended. Everything Ash wore while in New Jersey was either Oshkosh, or from Old Navy. Excepting, of course, the product samples Pepper sent Little Dude from the Avenger line.

"Look, lady, you tell me how I was supposed to know. They just looked like kids trying to get a present for their mom. I tried to explain we weren't that kind of store and then the taller boy pulled over eight hundred dollars out of his back pack, and wouldn't take no for an answer. And let me tell you the kid can argue. He claims his grandfather gave it to him. Still, I didn't even show him anything until the other one's sister assured me that the grandfather has money."

Darcy rolled her eyes. Only someone as bat-shit crazy as Odin would think that Tony Stark's kid needed an emergency stash of cash.

"So fine. Then the kid picks out a pin that costs over eight hundred dollars. I'm waiting for him to have a melt down because that's the one he wants and he can't afford it. But no. He just looks at me and says, '*a moment please*', and digs an American Express Centurion credit card, with Tony Stark's name on it, out of his little cartoon wallet."

"Superhero!" Darcy heard being yelled indignantly in the background.

Damn it! Now, Darcy wished Tony *had* given a seven year old a card. Ash must have liberated one of Tony's cards, while they were in the penthouse. One with his real name on it. Why the hell couldn't the little brat have lifted one of the Antonio Ingensønn's cards that Tony mainly used now that he was undercover? Darcy rubbed her forehead, trying to dislodge the tension headache that seemed to be settling in for a nice long visit.

From the long gusty sigh on the other end of the phone, Darcy was pretty sure she wasn't the only one with a massive headache forming.

"Look, I know it seems strange," *and wasn't that the understatement of the year*, "but the card wasn't really stolen, stolen."

She was still trying to spin a plausible story, when Deep Voice guy, wearily, interrupted her. "My assistant just got a call telling us to give it back to the child. Do you think it would be okay if I wait for you for you to get here, *before* I hand a No Limit Card back to a seven year old?"

OoooO

"You!" Darcy snapped as she and Ian were hurriedly escorted into the tiny, private display room where Deep Voice had ushered the kids the moment he'd realized he'd made a mistake. "Yes, you. Trendy Child!" She snapped to a pair of dark, sullen eyes, heavily rimmed with brown shadow. "The kid has a nanny that follows him everywhere. You know this. So explain to me how you thought this was a good idea?"

It was immediately apparent, despite their age gap, that the two strange brunettes huddling with Ash were related. And, from the silent, guarded glances they exchanged, before looking back at her, Darcy was willing to bet that they were used to covering for each other too. Or at least not ratting each other out.

All three kids, and the store owner who was gingerly perched on the edge of a small table, jumped when Darcy's Bat Phone rang.

OoooO

I am getting way too old for this shit, Tony thought as Jarvis put his call through the moment Darcy had hung up and gone into the store. Loki's Chief Minion was, barring Pepper herself, probably the best person that could have been called for a situation like this. But still....

"Darcy, how's Ash? Is he okay? Am I going to have to kill anyone? Did you bring a company car, or take a cab?"

"The kid's fine, no killing will be required, and yes we have a car with us, the driver is double parked right outside, no doubt racking up a citation as we speak."

"Great. Wonderful. Have Britannia take the DeLuca kids out to the car and wait. You stay with Ash. As soon as they're out of the way, I'll be right in."

"Tony, I have this, and besides, I'm not sure I can pry Trendy Child off Ash right now. She has a death grip on both of them."

"I know you got this. And I appreciate it from the bottom of my soon to be exploding heart. Honestly, I do. But I'd rather they be out in the car in case we have to do a big reveal. The owner, I can bribe and threaten to keep quiet. Neighbor kids, not so much."

OoooO

Activating stealth mode, Tony had flown into a nearby parking garage to land. Jarvis would take the suit back to the Tower, and call another car for him. All in all, Tony figured it would be better for everyone, if Loki found them waiting in the Tower for him when he returned home from Asgard this evening. That was, if he didn't beat them there because Heimdall opened his big damn mouth. Lo would need time to cool down before he *'chatted'* with Skjálfr, and Nerthus. And Tony definitely wanted a bit of distance between his god and Vince's sister.

Wiping sweat off his face, which was not entirely from his jog, Tony entered the jewelry store. While it wasn't tiny, it wasn't big either. He could faintly hear Debbie, somewhere in the back, arguing that she wasn't going to leave without Ash. This normally would have made Tony feel all warm and fuzzy, if he wasn't still feeling sick and nauseous from his recent panic, a panic he was kind of pissed at her for causing in the first place. She should thank her lucky stars that the kidnapping part of their scare had only lasted the first two minutes.

Apparently he was broadcasting terrified parent vibes, because before Darcy's assistant even noticed him, the guy behind the counter pointed to a nearby door.

Letting loose one of his ear piercing screams the minute Tony opened the door, Ash leapt down from Debbie's knee and flung himself, trembling, into Tony's arms.

Tony had to close his eyes due to the overwhelming rush of emotion welling up in him. Shaking like a leaf, Ash had a death grip around his neck as the boy repeatedly whispered apologies and pleas for understanding into Tony's hair. He tried to reassure the boy, still begging him for

forgiveness, but the words stuck in his throat, and it was all Tony could do just to keep from fainting from relief.

“Look, trust me you don’t want to be here ten minutes from now.” He heard Darcy telling the Delucas

Face twisted in concern, Ash peered intently into Tony’s eyes. “I asked them to help me, Daddy.”

“I know kiddo. Look, Big D? You just stay away from Mrs. Iggy for a week or two and we might all live to laugh about this okay?”

Twisting, her hands in her hoodie pocket, and looking incredibly worried, Debbie whispered, “Yes, sir.” Her eyes flicking up to meet Tony’s for the briefest of moments, before she her glaze slipped back down towards her brother who was leaning against her.

“Are you going to call our mom?” Vince asked quietly, cutting to what was, for them, the most important bit of information needed.

Tony blew out a heavy breath, thinking how much he hated having to be *‘the’* responsible adult in a situation. And he promised himself, the minute his kid went to bed tonight; Tony was going to bury himself in Loki’s arms and let his god de-stress and baby him until morning. Or maybe the weekend.

“No. You two didn’t really do anything wrong, wrong. Look, just go home and stay out of trouble, okay?”

Ian, now hovering by the open door, gathered the two of them up. As Tony heard him ushering them out of the store, he turned his attention back to Ash. Who was, as was his habit, wiping his damp, snotty face on the shoulder of Tony’s shirt. He hoped they’d be able to train the kid out of the practice soon, or at least before he left for college.

“But you,” he said, bouncing the boy to try and get him to look up. Stopping him from wiping anymore snot on Tony, only being a bonus. “You, are no doubt going to have to have a long talk with your mom about touching stuff that isn’t yours.” He took a deep breath, before grouching, “And other people are probably going to get a longer talk about putting stuff up where it can’t be meddled with.”

“I am really sorry Daddy,” the kid said, yet again, in a tiny, contrite, mumble.

“I know you are, sport.” Tony husked, blinking to clear his suddenly damp eyes. “Now can Daddy set you down a minute, so I try and straighten this out?”

tbc

Chapter End Notes

A comments are lovely. Even if it's a simple I loved YYY, or ZZZ confuses me. They let me know which part is catching your attention. If you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course

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Salvaging a Cunning Plan

Chapter Summary

"Hey! How's it going? Antonio Ingensønn." Oh? Damn. You don't know who I am do you?

Chapter Notes

Beta'd by our very own Emu Sam! *****Yay!*****

As I mentioned in the last chapter this was written while I was sleep deprived. You are not getting something destined to be a classic here. This is more like dryer fluff. :D

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Salvaging a Cunning Plan

As if by magic, a box of tissues, coffee setup, a glass of ginger ale, and several chocolate biscuits appeared on the table in front of them. Several minutes later, thanks to a few well used tissues apiece, three chocolate cookies, and the resilience of youth, Ash was in a much better frame of mind. So much so that not even the return of the store owner could dampen his spirits. Or the smile that spread across the kid's face when the man sat down, placing a black tray on the table in front of himself. The tray contained a large wad of cash, Tony's credit card, and a gaudy, sparkly pin, the sight of which caused the small boy sitting beside him to start to wiggle a bit.

Examining Tony closely, the owner gave him an extremely speculative look, before picking up the card and saying with an inquisitive lilt, "I have been instructed by card holder services to return this to the young gentleman..." He paused, carefully scrutinizing both the card, and Tony's features.

Okay, so he wasn't going to be able to slide out of this one without some kind of a snow job.

"Look, can we just say that a long time ago, Tony Stark and my mother were really close?" he asked with a sigh, tossing a slightly less prestigious, yet still impressive, Black Barclays Visa Card up on the table. This one registered to Antonio Ingensønn.

"Of course sir," the store owner agreed, giving Tony what he no doubt felt was a knowing glance, possibly not realizing that it actually made the guy look like he had gas.

"That's what I want to get Móðir for his anna 'versery," Ash whispered, in his penetrative little kid voice.

"But Ash, Buddy, you don't have to get Mommy an Anniversary present.

"But you are!"

"That's a Daddy-Mommy thing."

“But I love Móðir too!”

“Of course you do, Bud. But, honestly, you are off the hook on this one. It’s all on Daddy.”

Ash’s face scrunched up in thought, “I don’t have to?”

“Nope.”

“But I can if I want to. Right?”

“Well yeah. But--”

“I want Mommy to know how much I love him.”

Since he was aware of the WTF thoughts the salesman was hiding under his professional expression, a few of them no doubt due to their loose use of pronouns, Tony decided that this wasn’t a battle he wanted to continue in front of a stranger. Not that he had a chance of winning it anyhow, not with Ash channeling his inner Loki.

“You know what? Fine. You can get Mommy an Anniversary present.”

“Skygge!”

Because of course, the kid had chosen an overly large, pacing panther-y looking cat brooch. What the hell was it with seven year olds, and big assed brooches?

Tony’s thoughts flashed back on the several he had inflicted upon Maria. This, of course, before he found one that she had obviously taken off the minute they pulled away from the house and later forgot to retrieve from the glove compartment of Howard’s favorite car. Granted, like the ones Tony’d bought Maria, the one Ash picked out was not your usual little kid, rhinestone and gold plated piece. *They were Starks after all.* Instead, his choice was a massive white gold piece, covered with iffy diamonds, that cost seventeen hundred, and ninety-five dollars. According to the small tag attached to it.

“Are you sure, Sport?” Tony asked as Smarmy lifted the brooch knowingly from the tray, and placed on a small flat black velvet pad right in front of them. After a long minute ‘*admiring*’ the sparkly cat pin, he continued, “This isn’t exactly up to Mommy’s standards, and it might not be exactly h-her style.”

Before a wrinkle of thought could crease the kid’s brow, the smarmy bastard behind the table struck. Whirling like a dervish, he quickly tapped a code into a more secure case behind him, pulled a small velvet bag out of one of the many drawers, and then practically made with the magic hands as he lay another, obviously much more expensive, slinking cat brooch, beside Ash’s choice on the presentation pad.

“We do have also have this, sir; it’s a lovely Cartier consignment piece. Platinum, and eighteen caret white gold, pavé-set, with brilliant cut diamonds.

“Daddy!” Ash breathed, “it has blue in it like the tips of Skygge’s fur.”

And then didn’t Smarmy Bastard Dude, as Tony was now starting to think of him, allow himself just the tiniest of smug smiles, before catching Tony’s eye, and launching into his pitch. “The diamonds are mostly VVS2’s and range from F to H in color, the cuts of course, predominately in the very good range. The spots are buff top sapphires, and the eyes, untreated emerald. The nose is onyx, and the craftsmanship is, as always for a Cartier piece, exceptional,” he told Tony in a

smooth, oily voice, never once breaking eye contact, even while moving the tray closer to where Ash was leaning over the table. Smarmy tilted the pad back and forth a bit, so the wide-eyed child could watch the lights sparkle across the higher quality stones. “This one is listing for one-hundred and thirty-eight thousand dollars.”

Tony raised a brow. This was after all, nowhere near his first go-round in a jewelry store.

“But, there might be a tiny bit of room there,” Smarmy allowed.

Tony raised his other brow.

“And, I’m sure we could work something out, if you were interested.”

“*Whoa.*” Ash stretched out a finger to reverently stoke the piece a moment, before scowling accusingly at Smarmy, “You didn’t let *me* see this one.”

Breaking eye contact with Tony, Smarmy acknowledged the tiny glare now being directed to him. Pulling his lips into what he possible thought was a genial smile, the condescending bastard went full on Grinch, cooing, as if Ash was Cindy Loo Who. “The cat pin you picked out would make a fine gift, young sir.” Smarmy then pointed at the Cartier piece and said, “Sadly, this one is considered to be more of a Daddy present.”

Sugar Daddy maybe, Tony groused to himself. Not that Tony really has a problem with that. Sugar Daddy benefits were well worth every penny as far as he was concerned. But he had already picked Lo up a black lacquer and platinum Pierre Arpels Platine watch. It was something his god would like a whole lot better than a gaudy pin, no matter who made it. Besides, a man used to the finest craftsmanship in the Nine Realms, would not necessarily be impressed with Cartier, no matter how special Smarmy thought it was.

“Oh,” Ash said in a quiet, little voice. And after one last reverent touch, he closed his hand into a tight fist. No doubt to better resist the temptation of stroking the Cartier pin again.

Smarmy reluctantly started to slip the piece back into its protective bag, when Ash gasped, grabbing Tony’s arm and shaking it excitedly. “Daddy, I know! I know! Let’s get both! We can surprise Móðir, with one from me, and one from you! He can wear them together!”

And wouldn’t his fashionista of a spouse just love that? Because nothing said cutting edge style like two big assed brooches that looked like something grandma would wear on her church coat. He did, briefly, toy with the idea of standing tough and only getting the one pin. However, Tony knew from personal experience that once an idea settled in the head of either of his beloved tricksters, it took a baseball bat to dislodge it. Besides, what was important was how happy it made Ash. The fact that Tony wasn’t going to be the one wearing them? That was just a bonus.

tbc

Chapter End Notes

A comment or two would be lovely. And rewarded. Never let it be said, that I’m above bribery.

Even if it’s a simple I loved YYY, or ZZZ confuses me. They let me know which part

is catching your attention. If you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

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Cunning Plan? More like an offer you can't refuse.

Chapter Summary

Loki ties up a few loose ends. And then makes sure they stay tied up.

Chapter Notes

Beta'd by Emu Sam, before I tweaked it yet again. Sorry!

This chapter wasn't originally planned. And I am totally not liking it. But a few commenters seemed to wish for it... So here it is, a sad sorry excuse for a chapter. Sigh.....

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)



This was NOT Tony's first rodeo.

Perma Link <https://rennemichaels.tumblr.com/post/144152511213/ash-has-a-cunning-plan-its-hard-to-think-of>

Chapter 15 – Cunning Plan? More like an offer you can't refuse.

Days later, when Tony finally let him out of his sight, Loki was sitting at his dressing table, putting the last touches on his Lorraine look. It wasn't much; what part of his hair wasn't caught up in a loose bun, was fluffed out in a riot of natural curls. Add a bit of lip gloss, some light eye makeup, and one of his many high necked shirts--today's a crisp white cotton-- and... Ta-da! He was ready to face the neighborhood, without having to go through the bother of actually shifting. He winked saucily at his reflection. The fact that Tony found this look to be '*hot as hell*' on him was only a happy bonus.

OoooO

The terrified expression on Debbie Deluca's face, when she answered her door was heartwarming. Being able to strike terror into someone while dressed simply, in a short waisted jacket and jeans from Old Navy, was not easy after all. Still, the child did manage to greet them politely, and gesture for them to enter the apartment's small kitchen.

"Hi Debbie!" Ash piped, giving Debbie a sunny smile, pulling his hand free from Loki's grip.

"Umm. Mom and Dad aren't home, right now."

"No? Oh dear, that is a shame," Loki said with mendacious regret. "Well, perhaps *we* could talk, while the boys play?" Not giving the child an opportunity to come up with an excuse of some other task she urgently had to do, Loki gave Ash a little push, gesturing towards the two closed doors on the other side of the empty living room. "Darling, go see what Vince is up to in his room, while I talk to Debbie."

"Okay, Móðir," Ash said, shrugging his ever present Iron Man backpack off one shoulder.

"Don't forget, if you two make a mess of his room, you're cleaning it before we leave!"

"I know!" Ash bounded to the right hand door. He knocked on, and opened it in almost the same movement. "Vince! Wait until you see--" The bedroom door slammed shut, with, despite Tony's many reminders to Ash, enough force to rattle it within its frame.

Loki didn't say a word. He blamed inferior Midgardian construction for the problem.

"Shall we sit?" Loki waved Debbie towards one of the kitchen chairs. Purely by happenstance, once he had seated himself, his position blocked Debbie from leaving hers. "Yes. Well." Loki paused a moment before continuing, his lighter, Mrs. Iggy was voice totally at odds with his penetrating stare. "While I understand what happened last week is never going to happen again, I still think it's in everyone's best interest that you learn to handle such a situation if it ever *does* occur again. Don't you?" Loki smile was bright and shiny and razor sharp.

"Yes, ma'am."

"Wonderful, perhaps I can help. Your mother has told me you applied for a work permit; I assume you are looking for a job. Yes?"

Debbie went so still, a rabbit trying not to attract the attention of a fox would have been envious. And, since Loki wasn't really a cruel person these days, except on those occasions when that's what he and Tony were in the mood for, he didn't really enjoy scaring the girl. Much. Or at least not more than it took to make her think twice, the next time the boys tried to bribe her into something.

"Yeah?" Debbie replied, drawing the word out as if it were taffy.

"Might I ask, doing what?" Not that Loki didn't know, having already gotten a complete rundown from the child's mother, Carol Deluca. Apparently, a friend of hers was trying to get her some hours washing pots at a nearby Chicken Shack. If that fell through, she was going to ask if she could help detail cars on the weekends, at a garage her father had done a rewiring job for on the side for. Both of course, possible. But neither of which she was excited about due to the low pay, spotty hours and dirty working conditions. Loki made the appropriate noises, in the appropriate places as Debbie explained her plan.

"Humm, I can just imagine. Is smelling of chicken fat, or oil degreaser something you're looking forward to?"

"No," Debbie sighed, slumping forward onto her elbows, splaying her hands out on the table with a thump. "But all the good babysitting normally runs later than I'm allowed to be out, and they already have too many lifeguards at the 'Y'.

"Indeed." They sat there a moment in silence, both of them wondering how this was their lot in life. Debbie, to be a broke teenager, too young and unskilled to get a real job, and Loki having to waste time pretending, and manipulating school girls, where before he'd worked his wiles on kings. He and Tony were absolutely looking forward to making Ash feel very guilty someday, for all the hardships they'd had to endure so that Ash could live like a *normal* little kid.

Loki losing his master bath, and Tony missing his just-down-the-hall-workshop, were right at the top of their list.

"Well," he said, pulling a legal envelope out of his jacket pocket, and removing the document from inside of it. "As it turns out, we have a friend who is looking for some help; she's already talked with your mother and she thinks you'd do excellently." A frown puckered the girl's forehead, and she looked up at Loki from under a lowered brow. "I believe you met her the other day. Ms. Lewis? She excels at handling all sorts of problems. I know you would be able to learn a lot from her."

Debbie's eyes shot open in panic.

However, the pay was good for a youngling, the transportation issued was already hashed out, and of course Darcy was willing to work around Debbie's school schedule in a ways that no private employer would. At eleven dollars an hour, meals and transportation included, it was a very good deal. And while it would often involve a lot of cleaning breakrooms, storerooms, and picking up after other people, it would also include a chance for full time during the summer and some real office work that the girl could use as experience when she got older. The kid couldn't wait to sign it, even if it did mean she would be dealing with that Ms. Lewis lady.

Of course it helped that her parents had already co-signed the agreement, including (since she would often be using Ingensønn carriers for transportation) a strict confidentiality agreement that covered both company and personal information that she might inadvertently come across.

"That paper doesn't absorb the ink very well," Loki told her, "if you would just blow on it for a minute until it dries it won't smudge when you fold it back up." It also would be enough to seal a

geas compelling the signees not to gossip or speculate if they happened to notice anything they shouldn't. And while the breath from one's body didn't create as strong a contract, it also didn't alarm the mortal since you weren't asking them to sign in blood.

"You know, Mrs. Iggy," Debbie said, in between blowing on the damp ink, "I'm surprised Ms. Lewis even offered me a position. She was pretty mad at me."

"Well, Ms. Lewis knows that to be old and wise, first you have to be young and stupid." The girl huffed ruefully, a small smile spreading reluctantly across her face, as she glanced shyly at Loki. "However we would both prefer if you didn't make it a habit. Speaking of which, Ash's nurse Skjálfr feels that young ladies with secret routes in and out of their bedrooms would be stupid not to learn how to take care of themselves."

A deep blush crawled up Debbie's cheeks, as well as wide eyed alarm-- possibly because Skjálfr could be scary when she was angry, but more likely because Debbie suspected a number of people now knew that last week was far from the first time she had slipped out her bedroom window.

"Anyhow, Skjálfr is planning on teaching the boys martial arts, but first she needs a student she can train to help her. Your mother said you might be interested in helping in exchange for free private lessons." Loki gifted the child with one of his scarier smiles. "What do you think? Is this something you'd be interested in?"

"Yessssss?"

While people facing firing squads probably would have sounded more enthusiastic, Loki would take what he could get. "Excellent. Now, while Mister Iggy said that *he* wouldn't mention *anything* that happened last week to your parents..."

Debbie groaned and buried her face against the table, covered her head with her arms.

"I won't either as long as you train with Skjálfr. Deal?"

"Promise?" Debbie asked, her voice muffled against her arms.

"You have my word on it," Loki assured her, trying to keep the amusement out of his voice. Well aware of how difficult everything had seemed when one was a youngling.

"Fine. Deal." Not lifting her head, Debbie stuck out her hand. Loki shook it to seal the deal.

Laughing, he reached over and ruffled the girl's hair. "Marji made pies; would you and Vince like to come over and have some?" A dark head lifted enough for one eye to peek out at him. "I do believe one of them is cherry crumble."

Neither he nor Tony were too concerned about keeping that particular secret from the senior Delucas. After all the family was moving next month. And unbeknownst to the girl, Loki had already planted a few thoughts in Carol DuLuca's head, as to the best location for her increasingly hormonal daughter's new bedroom. And while Debbie seemed to be a resourceful child, Loki thought that a second story window, on a wall with no porch, in full view of the entire street would be enough to slow her down.

At least until she was older.

OoooO

Arriving fashionably late to a Stark event, was not something Tony could do anymore. A, because

he could no longer bank on surviving Pepper's rage, and B, because Loki loathed not being on top of things from minute one. This was why he, and the God of Assholes, swanned into the receiving area a full five minutes before the main doors opened.

Since the Ingensønn's had moved to New Jersey, Prince Loki of Asgard, had done away with the long flowing hair, makeup and whimsical fashion choices sported in previous public appearances. Tony Stark's partner now presented himself in an aggressively masculine way. Short, ruthlessly controlled hair, and severe, classical styling being the new order of the day. Along with a few touches of gray hair, and crow's feet that a couple of Lo's magic disguise pendants glamour'ed into place on the both of them.

However, looking slightly older or not, both of them were still smokin' hot in the new tuxes they were sporting. Unlike Tony though, Loki had abandoned Brioni, in favor of a nice little number that he'd gotten from Kiton. Not that anyone cared really. Except, for maybe the respective designers, if pictures of this evening were ever brought to their attention.

"Hi, Loki. Tony." Steve greeted them happily. A moment later his brow furrowed in puzzlement. "Umm, Tony? Why you two are wearing cat pins?"

Bastard that he was, Loki's grin was sharp, dark and mocking.



Picture Perma Link <http://rennemichaels.tumblr.com/post/139478660358/the-littlest-trickster-queens-grace-verse-the>

fini.

Chapter End Notes

A comment or two would be lovely.

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In the Dog House

Chapter Summary

Tony bestows an usual, an not entirely welcome present upon Loki, while Ash decides if he is a Team player.

Chapter Notes

Beta'd with many a helpful phrase or comment by Stella and Emu Sam! You both Rock!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 16 – In the Dog House

Whistling a jaunty tune, Tony entered Number Twelve Grimmauld Place. Setting his briefcase down on a small side table on the left of the front door, he opened it, and pulled out a small package, before turning to place a totally unchaste kiss on his beloved Trickster. And then another. And another. In fact, he didn't stop until the slight scowl that Loki had been wearing when he arrived was replaced by a lovely rose tint on his cheeks, and a tiny smile tipping up the corners of his god's now thoroughly kiss reddened lips. With one last nuzzle and a small nip on the long column of Loki's entirely delicious neck, Tony slipped away into the kitchen, well aware of being trailed by his slightly bemused spouse.

There were many differences between the planets of the Nine Realms, but so far Tony had noticed one constant, that being there would be a junk drawer in the kitchen. Hell, despite him having a complete workshop just a minute or so away in each location, there was one in Stark Manor, Malibu, and even his penthouse in Stark Tower. Additionally, they had one in Stark Haus, and he'd even found one in the palace kitchen in Asgard. And so, following the unwritten law of the Nine Realms, there was also one in Loki's New Jersey lair on Neptune Avenue. And thus, and so, it was only the work of a moment for Tony to dig through the mass of stuff that had no other home, to find a small hammer and the taped shut remains of a pack of finishing nails.

Propping himself in the doorway leading into the kitchen, Loki asked, "Tony, what in Helheim are you doing?" Loki was well aware that not using a professional grade, fully stocked tool box was like fingernails down the chalkboard of Tony's soul. Kitchen junk drawers, by their very nature, only contained cast off items placed there solely to keep others from violating the sanctity of the chief handyman's real tool box.

And normally, Tony wouldn't touch the cheap mismatched crap in that damn drawer... However, sometimes sacrifices had to be made in the interests of expedience. And if ever there was such a time, it was today. Nails and hardware store 'sale' hammer in one hand, mystery package in the other, Tony ambled over to the back door, tucking his package on the nearby windowsill before glancing over his shoulder at his god. "I have brought you a gift that keeps on giving," Tony declared. Cheeks still delicately tinted, Loki raised a brow.

"Everyone is a skeptic," Tony muttered under his breath, turning back to his task.

It was only a very short time before Tony had pounded an angled finish nail just above his eye-level, on the wall between the back door and the window beside it. Ripping open the brown paper wrapping, he pulled out a varnished rectangle wood panel. There were five cup hooks affixed in a horizontal row on the panel's left hand side. On the right side was an applied wooden silhouette of an old style dog house, complete with an arched door and one a last hook centered inside of it. Across the top in script letters, it said "In the Dog House." Using the brown twine tied to a hole on each top corner, Tony hung it on the nail. Ignoring the scoffing noises behind him, he pulled out five wooden dog cut-outs, each with a name written upon them, and without further ado, hung Tony, Ash, George, Thor, and Odin on the row of hooks.

Okay, so there were a few dents in the wood, and the paint on the dogs might have been a little faded, but it was the same style as the one his childhood house keeper used to keep in the servants pantry. Tony turned to Loki, batting his eyes, "A present for you my sweet, so that we may keepth track, of who hath incurred thy wrath."

"You couldn't just get me a giant stuffed rabbit?" Loki deadpanned, not in the least impressed by Tony's poetic stylings.

"Of course not, rabbits are what Pepper collects," Tony replied, losing the battle to keep his lips from twitching at the memory of that fiasco. Not that Pepper would ever let him forget it. "I had thought about putting it in the living room, but this is a better place."

"Oh. Yes. And let us thank the Norns for small favors, because the wretched thing goes so much better with French provincial and a cream color palette." Loki pushed off the door frame, eyeing his gift with disfavor. "I do know what this phrase means on Midgard," he informed Tony, reaching past him to take the Tony dog off its hook. He turned the dog over examining it for a long moment, before hanging it, with a flourish, in the dog house cut-out.

OoooO

Despite the sour looks his god had originally given the plaque, Tony counted it as a successful purchase. He always glanced at it when he came up out of the basement workshop. Sure, he knew when he was less than helpful, and of course, Jarvis would give him a heads up on the various annoyances that had landed on Loki's desk as part and parcel of their daily life. But you never knew who exactly was going to be the person who'd managed to get on the god's last nerve. And despite Loki's repeated protestations that the Dog House Plaque was vulgar and cheap, his god seemed to get some cathartic satisfaction out of snatching up one of the wooden dogs and hanging it in the little cut out dog house.

Odin spent a lot of time in there.

Of course, not every day could be spent messing with Loki, despite how much fun that was. So today, Tony was messing with the Quidditch broom's limiters. He had to make them absolutely tamper proof. Because, even with restrictions the damn things had the potential to be a liability nightmare. Hell, Pepper had taken one look at his designs and practically insisted he form a new company before he launched them.

Heh. Launched. Tony smirked to himself.

Tony chuckled under his breath as he delicately adjusted one of the broom's two gyroscopes, before checking the improved readouts on the screen floating in front of him. He really was on fire today.

The liability problem, Tony decided, in accord with Pepper's lawyerly input, would be much easier to solve if a small company, without deep pockets, held the patents. Not that Tony would have had the heart to refuse Pep if she had needed the project for a future SI quarter, but having her demand he spin them off to a newly formed company? His Trickster had been so proud of Tony and his mad manipulation skills. Not that he would admit it out loud.

'Pretty good for a Midgardian,' Tony's rosy ass.

Okay, so maybe he did have Jarvis mock up some posters showing happy children flying above the tree tops. And maybe there was some fear that Warner Brothers wouldn't play ball. Why anyone would worry about that he had no clue. Ingensønn Engineering had come up with the breakthrough product of the damn decade. There was no way a big conglomerate wouldn't hope to get in on that. Think of the advertising buzz. Of course, most likely they would be hoping to consume IE, not realizing that it was not actually a fledgling company, and that it had secret partners who were expert players of long standing. Not to mention a Trickster god, as well as the Queen of Asgard, as two of its main investors.

Loki had gathered up Ash and several of his friends to create the Greenville Coyotes, both to use in the videos and as the very first IE League team. Frigga-"Ash's Grandma, Not Queen of Asgard"-Borson was their team sponsor. Steve, with Thor as an occasional helper, was the coach of the other team in the promotional video. Loki had convinced him to assist by promising that once things got going, a portion of the league fees would cover membership dues for low income kids.

But it was Steve, who had convinced a prominent Brooklyn restaurant owner to sponsor a group of underprivileged kids as the new Brooklyn Dodgers. And he had personally created the logo for the team. He'd designed one that married his beloved Brooklyn Bridge and Script logo with a quidditch broom and snitch. Loki was already quietly laying land mines should the Los Angeles Dodgers or the MLB cause any fuss about the registration and trademarking of the new team's name and logo, not that he was too worried. Particularly since the MLB had already lost a similar case on them. It also helped that the restaurant sponsoring the kids had been the first one to beat them in court over it.

Loki and Darcy had actually showed Warner Brothers three versions that the Ingensønn Engineering's Sports franchise was going after. The first part of the video showing kids playing --- a close to the ground representation of Harry Potter's Quidditch, of course. The second was a Terry Pratchett-esque version with witches and wizards throwing Curse Balls at each other, if the kid can catch the ball, they can use it as extra ammo, but if it hits anywhere but the gloves, it leaves a puff of chalk forcing the kid to land and be resurrected, i.e. brushed off, before returning to play. And the last, just a straight up all-American Salem/Bewitched battle involving predominately white uniforms, and a sack of water balloons filled with colored 'magic' spells, i.e. paintball water, to toss at the opposing team.

In the end, it was almost insulting how cheaply they got branding rights in exchange for a two years head start before other versions were launched.

"I should be the Seeker," a slightly disgruntled voice at his elbow announced.

Tony's hands froze from where they were making adjustments on the broom. He glanced sidelong towards the stomp-y looking storm cloud that was currently the hope of his house.

"Really Buddy? And what makes you say that?" Tony was pretty sure he knew why, but he was interested to see if he was right.

Brow furrowed, arms tightly crossed on his chest, Ash silently glared up at him from underneath

an unruly thatch of chocolate brown hair. His lips thinned in displeasure.

“You don’t think that maybe Kevin is a bit better at finding things, so he should be the Seeker?” Tony asked lightly, pretending only the mildest of interest in the topic.

Obviously not from the look Tony was getting. Still, the silence stretched on long enough that Tony finished his adjustments and closed up the broom he was working. Eventually though, Ash figured out how to formulate an answer that didn’t involve the word ‘duh’.

“I’m a prince. And my daddy is making the brooms,” Ash said firmly. “So I should get to be Seeker if I want to be.”

Called it. And Tony didn’t have to be a genius to know that that argument wasn’t going to fly. Not in House Stark.

As if on cue, a voice floated down at them from the top of the stairs. “Are you a prince? Or are you just a normal boy living on Midgard?” Looking up, they saw Loki in the doorway, his silhouette outlined with a halo of light coming from the kitchen window. Loki either had some sort of sixth sense for when a life lesson was needed, or he and Janis had developed a way to communicate that Jarvis and Tony were missing.

Or maybe both.

“Do tell me,” Loki purred, gliding down the cellar steps in into Tony’s basement stronghold. Stopping a few feet away from Ash, Tony’s god had that mildly interested look that spelled trouble for all who knew it.

Ash didn’t answer, he just looked stuck his lower lip out a bit more. The kid was scary smart when it came to knowing when to wait.

“Because, if you are a prince, should you not be living in a palace on another realm, learning your duties?”

Tony just shrugged and shook his head when Ash glanced over to see if he could garner any parental support from him.

“No?” Loki continued silkily, when no answer was forthcoming. “Well then, if you are just a normal boy, how can you ignore the fact that other children might be more adept in certain areas than you are, and deserve to have a fair chance to show their skills?”

By this time, Tony was pretty sure Ash knew he was going to lose this argument. The kid had been taught, by Loki no less, not to enter an argument you couldn’t win. So he had to know, Loki wouldn’t be questioning him this way if Ash wasn’t in the wrong. Although Tony honestly couldn’t fault the kid for those times when he pressed on, because it wasn’t like Tony ever admitted defeat without Loki actually handing him his ass. And Tony was a whole lot older than seven. However, in Tony’s defense, he mostly did it for great makeup sex afterwards. If Tony was going to lose an argument, he wanted to at least get something for it.

“But my daddy is making them. No one would even get to play if he wasn’t making them for me,” Ash retorted, chin raised and eyes steady on his mother's.

And didn’t Tony know that was not at all what had happened. It also had nothing to do with Stark industries, or Tony’s obsession with anti-gravity vehicles. Ash and his friends owed the actual creation of Quidditch brooms to fact that the team mom for Aśbrand’s old soccer team got on Loki’s last nerve one too many times. And sadly, it seemed that Quidditch practices often seem to

conflict with the posted soccer schedule, causing Ash and many of his friends to have to choose which sport they were going to participate in.

Loki, brows rose delicately as a falsely sympathetic smile graced his features. “I see. So... Your argument is that since your rich father invented the item, and has the funds to produce them, you should get to be whatever you want on the team? Even, if it might cause your team to lose their matches, because a more skilled child was passed over?” Loki’s tone was light as he pretended to peer closely at the readings displayed above Tony’s work bench. Yeah, like they didn’t all know how Loki felt about favoritism.

Tony suppressed a snort at the indignant pout Ash was now trying not to let show. But hey, at least the kid was now glaring at Loki, rather than him. Not arguing, mind you, the kid wasn’t stupid or anything like that. Just a bit entitled, which was something they were working on.

And no, he did not need Pepper constantly pointing out the irony of him and Loki trying to cure entitlement in someone else, thank you very much. They were both well aware they had their own ‘issues’ in that area. Regardless, neither of them wanted Ash to grow up to be as mal-adjusted as they had been. Or still were, if you asked the red heads.

Reaching out, Loki absently smoothed Ash’s messy hair with long white fingers before pointing to the test results. “Progress?” he asked Tony, the two of them paying no attention to the silent, sullen child standing at Tony’s work desk.

“Yeah. I think so. It will all depend on the boundary sensors. No more than three feet off the ground outside in a grassy free fly, unrestricted area. Inside a regulation play field? We’re going to go with eight feet over a foam pit, and fifteen feet over water.”

“The new foam composition is keeping the striking force of the Bludgers within the limits?”

“Yeah. Jarvis, call up the test results on the latest batch.”

Both of them pretended not to notice Ash stomping up the stairs.

OoooO

Tony was on the back end of an all-nighter when Jarvis turned off his music and said, “Sir? You may want to go to the kitchen and either assist or deter young sir.” Tony looked up from underneath a shock of unruly hair that frustrated fingers had machine oil moussed it into wild spikes over the last several hours.

“Why? What’s he up to now?”

What Ash was up to, was perching on one of the breakfast bar stools. Balancing precariously, the hope of his house was trying to work a crude semi-animal looking shape onto the hook inside a small dog house cut-out. “What’cha doing, sport?” Tony asked, putting out a hand to keep the kid from falling off the stool as he started in surprise. Plucking the item out of Ash’s hand, Tony saw that it consisted of some low temp molding plastic, shaped more or less dog-like, and obviously meant to replicate the other ones on the plaque. Tony peered at it, forcing his tired eyes to focus on the painted name.

Loki?

“Not móðir, huh?” Tony observed. Snagging a small paring knife from a nearby holder, he bored the hole at the top of the dog a bit bigger before handing it back to his son.

“Can I ask why móðir is going in the dog house?”

“It’s not fair,” Ash said as he placed the dog on the hook located inside the small doghouse. “I want to play Seeker too.”

“You still on that, huh?”

“If I was on Uncle Thor’s team he would let me be a seeker.” Ash said in a small, sad voice, seemingly not finding as much satisfaction at placing someone in the dog house as Loki did.

"Possibly, buddy. Possibly. But between you and me? I have to wonder what Uncle Steve would say to you changing teams, just so that you could ask Uncle Thor to take the seeker position off another kid? Stars and Righteousness, is just as strict as your mom when it comes to that fair thing, you know."

Then... Something didn't seem quite right. *What the hell?* Tony blinked, again trying to focus his tired eyes.

Tony, with Ash following his puzzled look, watched as green mist enveloped the Dog House plaque, after a moment, the plaque stretched and a sixth hook appeared on the left side. Then the mist concentrated over the misshapen plastic dog, which morphed into a certain diamond crusted cat pin. The pin wavered a bit, rearranging itself slightly until the jeweled feline had approximately the same outline as the wooden dogs. Although it was of course still recognizably a jeweled cat. Loki didn't 'do' dogs.

Tony was just thankful it was the pin Ash had picked out, not the much more expensive Cartier piece that he'd bought as an anniversary present for his Trickster.

“It is equally not fair that your father had to give up his big workshop so we could stay here.” Loki yawned, paddling into the kitchen wearing only a pair of low slung pajama pants. Pants which immediately caught Tony’s attention, by the way they were barely held up by sculpted hipbones. Skygge, Loki’s mountain lion sized cat, followed closely, and equally silently, behind him. Peering blearily around the kitchen, Loki futilely brushed tangled black curls away from his face, only to have them spring right back where they had been. “Or,” Loki’s voice was still sleep roughened, “that I had to give up my spa bathroom and library. But here we are.”

Tony almost laughed as Loki resorted to trying to blow one of the more persistent curls away from his nose, apparently not yet awake enough to use spell work to beat his unruly locks into submission.

“I wonder.” Loki, yawned again, before turning on the sink faucet so he could temporarily plaster his hair away from his face by dragging wet hands through it. “Rather than worry about what is or isn’t fair.” Ash opened his mouth to retort, but Loki continued before he could. “Have you given any thought to what you could do to improve enough to possibly qualify for the Seeker position during next season’s try-outs?”

Oooo Compromise. Ash liked that better than candy. *Usually.*

Ash looked thoughtful for a long moment. Tony could almost see the wheels turning in the kid’s head. Next season wasn’t today, but it was better than never.

Ducking his head a bit to watch his footing, Ash carefully turned to so he didn’t have to look over his shoulder at his mother. “More practice?” Ash at last offered uncertainly.

“Indeed?” It was now Loki’s turn to look thoughtful. “I think you might be right. Jarvis, is anything

going on at the Pott's Center today?"

"Not at this time. Shall I have them retract the floor over the ball pit? Or would you rather use the lake area in the covered garden?" Jarvis queried, "Both are available until Thursday."

Eyes lighting up, Ash threw himself at Loki, absolutely sure that his móðir would catch him. "Can Jeffy and Vince come? Can we wear our swim suits?" He begged.

There was nothing Ash liked better than 'accidently' falling off his broom and into the small pond. And if he could knock an adult off their broom so they joined him.... That was apparently little kid comedy gold. Particularly if it was the 'cat-like' parental unit that loved water, but hated to be splashed.

While he really did have other things he should be doing, and he'd been up all night, Tony knew what the rest of his day was going to consist of. "Shut my files down, Jarvis. Have Skjálfr see if DeLuca Junior, and Sir Jeffy want to join us. Oh, and though you know how it pains me to say this, tell Aldfrig to bring the van around about nine."

Still giggling at Tony's woeful faux why-do-we-even-have-a-van voice, Ash gave his mother one more heartfelt hug. Wiggling out of Loki's arms, Ash dropped to the floor, and quickly ruffled Skygge's ears. And then, the pride of the House of Stark, darted up the stairs calling for Sir George to wake up because they were going flying!

Tony snaked one arm around Loki's bare waist steering him towards the breakfast bar. He paused only long enough to slap the god's favorite cup in the coffee machine and hit the button marked, despite numerous death threats, Bambi. His goal was now clear. First, caffeinating his god, and then plotting how he could get his god's hair wet enough during practice that no amount of magic would stop it from curling madly for the entire day.

Hopefully, without being blatant enough about it to get himself killed. Or worse, earn a night sleeping on the couch.



Permalink to the picture

<https://rennemichaels.tumblr.com/post/146646695463/the-littlest-trickster-chapter-16-tony-bestows>

Chapter End Notes

Comments are much appreciated. Even if it is a simple I loved YYY, or ZZZ confuses me. They let me know which part is catching your attention.

If you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

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The Magic School Bus

Chapter Summary

If it isn't one damn thing it's another. Coping with life and magic is getting on Tony's last nerve.

Chapter Notes

My Halloween Gift to you! Please enjoy another short story in The Littlest Trickster collected edition. ;D

Beta'd with much help and many suggestions for improvement Stella and Emu Sam! Whoot!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 17 - Magic School Bus

Tony slumped across the breakfast bar clutching his coffee like it was the last life preserver on the Lusitania. It had been a rough couple of months. First there was that whole school field trip fiasco with the bus being stuck in traffic for six hours, due to a bogus bridge closing. Not that it had actually been anyone's fault. The entire mess was caused by that round-as-a-ball windbag politician having a pissing contest with one of the local mayors ...a fact Tony made sure Loki didn't find out about. He had enough problems with Loki winding up the local police chief during Neighborhood Involvement night. Although in Loki's defense, due to the Heirs of Asgard being in the neighborhood, the area had experienced a dramatic reduction in crime courtesy of the State Department and some fairly ruthless moves by SWORD. But, while Tony agreed that the average response time of the local cops sucked, he would never admit it out loud.

At any rate, Ash and his nurse Skjálfr (who had 'volunteered' to help wrangle the little crumb crushers) had been stuck in gridlock on the wrong side of the river until way past even Tony's bedtime. And no, Tony did not fly over there in an Iron Man outfit and whisk the kid away. But he had considered it when he'd gotten the heads up from Hill. What he did do was race upstairs, two at a time, to stop Loki from doing something stupid like opening a dimensional rift, and snagging the kid home. And after that 'discussion', while they were making non-magical, non-superhero plans for extracting the hope of their house... They'd got a call from the school, breaking the news to all the parents that the bus had to be returned *to* the school, before any of the children could be released. That meant, of course, that Loki couldn't just discreetly pop the two of them somewhere close enough to walk to the bus, leave Skjálfr to assist, extract Ash, and take him to the Tower until the whole bridge mess was sorted out.

"This! *This* is why you don't live in Jersey, Loki!" Tony had said.

Admittedly, he'd *said* it with a good bit of volume, and apparently more growl and snarl than his god would let pass without escalation.

A great deal of escalation. Tony had been banished to the couch in his lab that night.

And then Loki's damn cat had freaked out the neighbors by chasing pigeons off of all three of the roofs that made up Casa De Stark, New Jersey. Only one of which they owned as far as the neighbors knew. To the general public, it appeared that Loki's giant cat was leaping onto their neighbor's roofs, his claws doing a damn-damn on their shingles. While he hasn't mentioned it yet, Tony is planning to have rolled seam metal roofing, perhaps with extra slippery solar sheet, installed on all three roofs at the first sign of a leak—not to discourage the cat, so much as it was the ecologically right thing to do. At least was the story he was going to stick to.

And while Loki hadn't really been the cause of either of those two incidents, it seemed like they were the beginning of their— Tony didn't want to call them *disagreements*. But genius though he was, he couldn't think of any other label to stick on them, because he sure didn't want to call them *fight*s.

Usually he and Loki were totally on the same page when it came to parenting and disciplining Ash. Admittedly, Loki decided which page, but Tony always looked at it, and agreed with him. After all, Loki had a lot more experience with parenting that didn't involve drunken rages, or absentee parents. Oh, sure, Tony had occasionally tossed in the odd plea for leniency when he figured Loki had a *Princely Behavior* stick shoved too far up his ass, but amazingly that did not happen very often.

Okay, so it did, but Loki had been getting better about compromising with Tony when he pointed it out.

But lately, it seemed they couldn't agree on anything having to do with Ash. The damn kid was doing all kinds of crazy stuff, and Loki, yes Loki, was totally fine with the crap the kid was pulling. It was like the god damned planets had decided to re-align or something. Now Loki was all for letting the kiddo get away with the shit. And worst, since Tony had only the fuzziest clue of how to deal with it, since most of those *disagreements* involved the kid misusing magic.

OooooO

“Well that went really well,” Tony drawled sarcastically, slipping out of Ash's bedroom, and glaring at Loki. While Asgard as a whole depended on Heimdall, Odin's all seeing throne, and Heckle and Jeckle when an outside witness was needed, Tony didn't have to. It had taken years, but he'd pretty much managed wireless sensors and cameras in *all* of his properties, and most of the public areas of the palace. They were mostly for the use of the Stark AI's, but sometimes they came in handy for parental sorting out of he-said-she-said's involving the heir to the House of Stark. The saved feed being what the love of his life, who didn't even fucking look up when he entered the room, was currently reviewing.

“He finally fell asleep,” Tony said when it became clear that Loki wasn't going to acknowledge him. “Although, I am pretty sure, he would have done it quicker in his own room at home.” Quirking one brow, Loki gave him ‘a look’. “I still don't understand why we're staying in the palace tonight. We don't live that far away,” Tony said with forced patience.

“Thor and I have a meeting with a trade group from Nidavellir before this evening's banquet. And Mother has special entertainment planned in the Youngling's Garden—”

“Which will go as well as this morning's play-time fiasco?” Tony snapped in remembered displeasure at trying to convince Ash that he'd been a total jerk, something not made easier by the way the kid argued like a high priced lawyer. Or, by Loki assisting Ash to frame his arguments on those rare occasions when he faltered.

So not helpful.

Admittedly, Tony was forced to agree that the kids Frigga had invited for a palace play date were being more than a tad clueless and condescending. However, that did not give Ash an excuse to look down his nose, and in that soft, sneering, oh so superior manner that he obviously picked up from someone other than Tony —i.e., Loki— deride their intelligence at passing up a chance to study magic. Or speculate that their families and ancestors had all the innovation and drive of gravid milch cows.

And how the fuck did the kid even know about regular milch cows? Let alone pregnant ones? They lived in the god damn suburbs. What time they hadn't lived downtown or in a freaking palace. No cows. None. Not a damn one. Expecting, or otherwise.

The screen Loki was holding replayed the section where one of the kids, a big freckly blond, had taken offense to the insults pouring about him like poisoned honey. Freckles, in return, blustered all up in Ash's face, yelling, *'hush thy mouth!'* And to be honest, if Tony'd been there, other than laughing hysterically at a kid angrily yelling for someone to 'hush', Tony could have told Freckles that the only time Ash ever backed down was when he was playing you. And that wasn't the case in this instance. A moment later there was a perfect shot of Skjálfr in the background hurrying towards them to intervene, just as Freckles poked Ash hard in the chest.

In addition to Loki's smooth way with an insult, Ash had also inherited his speed. There was a blur of movement as Freckles' feet were swept out from under him, at the same time crossed arms flicked out, almost faster than could be seen. Pushing hard, Ash had bowled Freckles right into the other kids, who were massed behind him in grade school solidarity. With a hard whistle, he aborted an attack by Sir George, who instead just circled menacingly. With the occasional dive bomb run that, despite the screams and failing, never quite turned into physical contact on the dragon's part.

"Don't you dare smile! This isn't funny." Tony growled at his partner, as Loki re-watched, again, the pile on where Ash managed to evade a couple more lunges by Freckles. Ash danced around, distracting the other kids with big flashes of light, while smacking the heck out of Freckles. In addition to again monologuing about how stupid they all were for not studying magic.

And tossing in a few fire balls that Loki murmured appreciatively about the size of.

And yes, Tony did find it slightly worrisome that their kid already had the whole Super Villain monologuing thing down to an art.

Finally, Loki looked up from the screen. "They sneer their disdain about magic, to the child of a mage. Then they are unwise enough to deride his Midgard companions as uncouth barbarians? And when their words have no effect, they line up in solidarity behind the largest child as he tries intimidation Aðbrand into silence, and when that doesn't work they offer him violence? They deserved everything that happened to them. They should in fact be glad that the child had not yet started advanced magic training due to living on Midgard. Otherwise there would have been more than one blackened eye and bloody nose."

"And might I just mention again, that you didn't say a single word of reproach to Short Round for those."

"The guards and Skjálfr intervened."

"Yeah? And what's going to happen at the kid's party your mom has planned for tonight? You don't think maybe the piñata isn't the only thing that might get smacked."

“We do not have piñata’s here,” Loki scoffed. Because yeah, didn’t that just make Asgardian children’s parties so superior to Earth’s. “And besides, this will not be a normal children’s picnic, with some crusty old bard singing and telling them tales they can reenact after dinner with toy weapons. Instead, Marji and Esja are going to show movies.”

“Uh-huh.” Tony eyed Loki speculatively from lowered brows. “And might I ask what movies they are going to see?”

“A few Harry Potter movies of course. The tradesmen’s children she is also rounding up will be more open to them than those of the nobles. Then I thought perhaps a nice low level game of curse ball,” Loki said in a self-satisfied tone. “You may want to check the Younglings Garden, and make sure the boundary field is correctly calibrated to keep the brooms both in the garden and at the grass surface height.”

“But--”

“I will also have Master Wrenfr on hand to prevent any accidents or mishaps.”

There was a face Tony could have made at the mention of Loki’s old tutor. But, you know what? After a while, when it came to Loki, you just had to learn to roll with it. The guy’s plans had more twists than a pretzel.

“You are going to show kids that aren’t big fan of magic, movies about how another realm views magic?”

Loki lifted an amused brow.

“And then let them play a game of pretend magic? On a product we don’t currently sell here? While a having that mage tutor you hired for me, ride herd on them?”

Loki tilted his head, gifting Tony with a wry smile. “Problem?”

Tony wanted to say something sharp and cutting. He really did, if only because he hadn’t enjoyed being the disciplinarian this afternoon. Being a responsible parent to Ash was Loki’s job after all.

But honestly? Letting the little snots that tried to rough up his kid see that other realms thought magic was cool? And making them do it while rubbing elbows with a bunch of the merchant and craftsman kids that the House of Stark had business relationships with? And all under the gimlet eye of the scariest nurse Tony has ever met? Helped by her equally competent daughter and a magic tutor favored by the crown?

While he was reluctant to admit it... He was after all mad at Loki’s lackadaisical attitude towards parenting lately. Still... Those kids *were* snots, and Ash did throw a mean curse ball...

Chapter End Notes

If anyone hangs in google hangouts, look me up. If I am on line I can be found in Frosted Ao3ers. Or email me your Ao3 name for an invite. rennemichaelsfic (((@))) gmail ((((.)))) com.

Comment or Kudos are appreciated.

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[Complete list of RenneMichaels writings, gifts, and art.](#)

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[The Trouble with Tricksters](#) COMPLETE - Loki is kept in Stark Tower, but he is a NOT silent, dignified, lone figure, mostly avoiding the Avengers he is forced to share living quarters with. Instead he is an in your face brat. Who walks a fine line between annoying the shit out of all of them but doing it in a way that isn't blatant enough for anyone to stomp on him without an avenging Thor coming after them. 33,251 Words

.
[Palaces of Sand and Gold](#) COMPLETE If Tony and Loki ever broke up, Tony and the SI lawyers wouldn't stand a chance against Odin and his Logmars in a custody struggle. Fortunately it hasn't come to that, but it is a struggle dealing with overzealous grandparents? Domestic One Shots in the Queens Grace Verse that can be read alone. 9563 words.

.
[The Littlest Trickster](#) COMPLETE - Tony Stark finds out that neither he nor Loki are any match for a child determined to return to Earth. A series of One Shots as the newest heir of Asgard experiences Life on Midgard. Queens Grace Verse AU, Comes after Palaces of Sand and Gold, but can be read alone. Co-written with Ykmust. 27,800 words

.
[Queens Grace](#) COMPLETE WITH SEQUEL - After the New York attack, Odin has taken Loki's magic, made him mortal and imprisoned him. But Asgard is not a safe place for the Trickster under these conditions. Recent events make Odin decide to take away one more thing from his second son, his memory going back for the last four years, making Asgard unsafe for Loki's reduced station. From stories Thor had told, Frigga decides that Tony Stark's tower would make an excellent secure location for amnesiac Loki to be under house arrest. 225,458 words.

.
[Anthony of Asgard](#) - COMPLETE - After several years of being housed in Stark Tower as a state prisoner of Asgard, Loki is recalled to Realm Eternal. Devastated Tony is now minus a lab partner, wingman and a snark buddy for movie night. Pepper has moved to the west coast and married, SHIELD is doing some crazy shit and with the exception of occasionally seeing Bruce, Tony doesn't have much interaction with his former team mates. He wonders how it is possible to feel so lonely in a city so full of people. However he's an engineer and a genius... he can fix this. All he has to do is convince Queen Frigga and Odin All Father to go along with his plan. - Sequel to Queens Grace.

.
[How Desperate Are You?](#) COMPLETE WITH SEQUEL – Loki has had a bad year and after leaving Midgard with Thor and challenging Odin isn't making it any better, but no matter how smart you are... Sometimes stubborn happens. It may not seem to be in your best interest, but how desperate are you for a resolution? Any resolution. Loki is returned to Asgard and nothing good happens, but Loki isn't the only one with issues, Odin has plenty of his own, especially in the realm of A+ Parenting. Loki is desperate to escape from Asgard, Odin and his past. 73,000 Words

.
[**Desperate for Change**](#) COMPLETE - Returning to Midgard after an absence of almost two years, Loki finds that as desperate for change as he has been, some changes will take time to get used to, especially when they concern his relationship with Tony and Pepper. Sequel to How Desperate Are You? 77,000 Words

.
[**Lets Bark a Deal**](#) COMPLETE - A spell goes wrong leaving the Avengers and Loki with a very different outlook to say the least. Tony's need to make a deal with Loki is hampered by the body he finds himself in. One Shot

.
[**Lessons from Asgard – Courtesy of Loki 2 - The Dark World**](#) COMPLETE - A primer for anyone who has ever wondered what the heck is going on in the Eternal City. More humor than spoiler, but if you are a stickler please don't read. Asgard Secrets Exposed

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